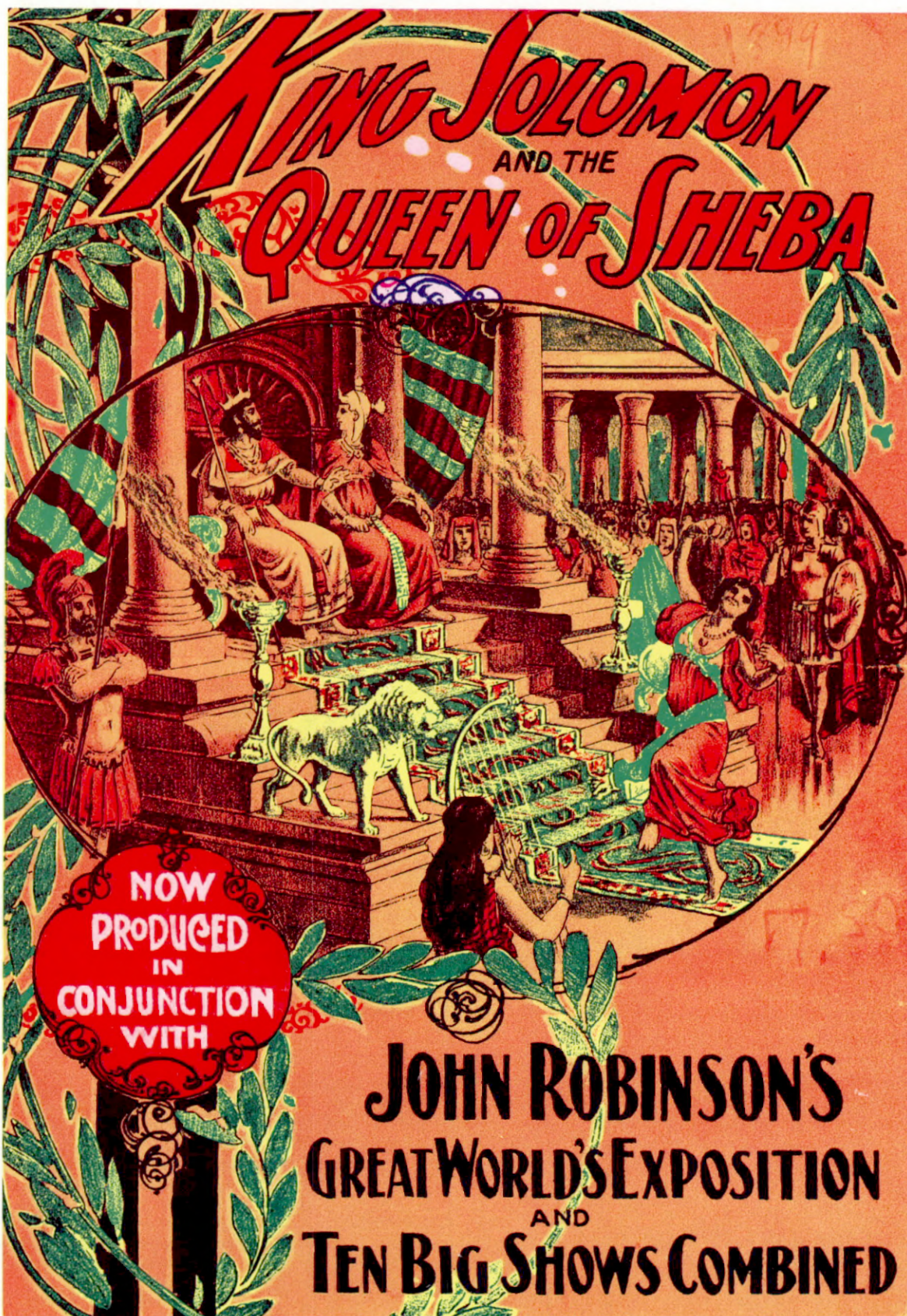


# BANDWAGON

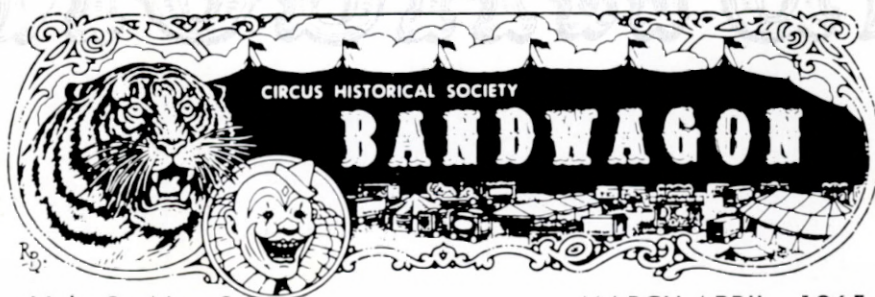
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MARCH-APRIL, 1965

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#### FRONT COVER

The cover of the 1899 program of the John Robinson's 10 Big Shows is reproduced in the same colors as the original. "Solomon & Sheba" was the big spec of the show that season. Original program from Pfening Collection.

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#### THE PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Please send in your dues payment as soon as possible after receiving your notice from the treasurer. Annual dues come due each year on May 1. Prompt payment will aid the treasurer and secretary in their work. This year the by-laws will be strictly enforced and no one will receive a copy of the July-August Bandwagon who has not paid his dues by then.

The committee is hard at work making plans for the Peru convention. Full details will be printed in the Bandwagon as they become available. Mrs. Meeker and Secretary Condon will appreciate suggestions from the membership concerning the convention program.

Please continue your recruiting efforts to obtain new members as we hope to reach our goal of 200 by the end of the year.

#### FOR SALE FULL SET "WHITE TOPS"

Circus fan's association magazines. 8 books bound in 9x11 inch white tent-canvas (lettered in black). April, 1927 to Jan.-Feb., 1965. Make offer for lot. (Buyer pay express or freight C.O.D.).

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#### 1965 CHS ROSTER MAILED

At long last the new membership roster of the Circus Historical Society has been completed and placed in the mail. If you have not received your copy, drop the Bandwagon editor a note. The post office will not return or forward these and if you have had an address change you will not receive your copy.

#### JANUARY-FEBRUARY ISSUE DELAY

The editor is very sorry about the delay in mailing the January-February, 1965, issue of the Bandwagon. After keeping the magazine on schedule since taking over in 1961, it was not possible to complete this issue in time for mailing in February, due to an extensive business trip. An extended period at the printer didn't help either. The concern of many readers, in not receiving their copy on time, is acknowledged. We shall do everything possible to keep this from happening again.

#### ROYAL AMERICAN TRAIN PHOTOS

The April, 1965, issue of TRAINS magazine will include photos of the entire loaded Royal American carnival train. All cars will be shown in a spread of photos taken in Topeka, Kansas, in 1963, by Orin C. King.

#### NEW CIRCUS RECORD

A fine new circus record has just been cut by the Purdue University band, according to CHS Sverre O. Braathen, a leading authority on circus music.

A number of Karl King marches, like Sells-Floto Triumphant, Garland Entree and New Corn Palace, have not been recorded before. Other marches on the album include Independence, Bullets and Bayonets, Repasz Band, Zacatecas, Domingo Ortega, Emblem of Freedom, Olympia Hippodrome and In Storm and Sunshine.

The record is by Fidelity Sound Recordings, number LPS 1244.





**1965  
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**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey 1964 Photos  
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Set No. 1, 23 pix, \$3.00. 9 views of RR cars, tunnel car No. 20 with runs down, wagons on runs, unloading scenes, view inside tunnel car, tractors unloading and pulling wagons.

Set 2. 22 pix, \$3.00. All unloading scenes, wagons on runs, cat cages, arena steel wagon, tractors, cat meat wagon, float wagons, tunnel car No. 24, inside of tunnel car.

Set 3. 35 pix, \$4.00. All 19 cars close up of new RB&B train, also tunnel car No. 20 with runs down, each individual car of train.

Set 4. 22 pix, \$3.00. Bulls, horse tent and bull tent at KC, Mo. Hanneford horses, camels, tigers, float wagons pulled by tractors.

Set 5. 21 pix, \$3.00. Stock cars unloading, liberty stock, lead stock, all bulls and camels enroute to lot from RR unloading point, camels, llamas, zebras, all 4 stock cars and view of tunnel cars. 1921 Howes Gt. London, 17 pix, \$3.50; 1936 Cole, 23 pix, \$4; 1936 Barnes, 44 pix, \$8.50; 1936 RB&B, 48 pix, \$8.50; 1938 Barnes-Floto, 58 pix, \$12; all wagons 1949 Cole, 16 pix, \$3; 1960 Strates Shows, 59 pix, \$8; Christy Bros. parade, 23 pix, \$5; Sells-Floto, 20 pix, \$5.

Gollmar Bros., 15 pix \$4.00.

101 Ranch, 40 pix \$8.00.

Campbell Bros. 1908, 23 pix, \$8.00.

1960 Beatty Show, 40 pix, \$6.50.

12 pix, MACK trucks, \$4.00.

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# The M. L. Clark Wagon Show

By HOMER C. WALTON

The Clark name was associated with circuses for a period spanning 56 years. It was a name that came to mind whenever "mud" or wagon overland shows were mentioned. This is the story of the Clark family and the circuses they operated.

Mack Loren (M. L.) Clark was born in Brown County, Texas, in 1857, where his father, Joe Clark, was a rancher. His father died when M. L. was still young. On his own M. L. cut and hauled lumber for the first frame house in Coleman, Texas. He later operated a freight hauling business out of Brownwood, Texas, a railhead.

M. L. had a brother, Wiley (W. C.) who was twenty years older. While he owned a ranch in Brown County, W. C. was bitten by the "show bug." He had two knee figures (dummies) he used in a ventriloquist act. One was Irish, called Mike, and the other was a Negro called "Snowball." He also had a "magic-lantern" and slides. W. C. put his show on a pack horse and rode about the country playing schools and church houses.

M. L. joined his brother around 1885, and together they framed a wagon show, known as The Clark Bros. Shows. A tent was rented. M. L. furnished the wagons from his freight business and W. C. furnished the talent. They made money, and in 1888 purchased some of the Pogy O'Brien show equipment and the elephant "Empress." This bull was a bad one and was known to have killed four men. George Hartzell, a well known clown of

that period, and the elephant man, along with a few others from the O'Brien show, went with the Clarks. Hartzell stayed with the Clark show five months.

The Clark brothers played and wintered mostly in the south, but one year wintered as far north as Ironton, Missouri. They continued touring until 1891, when they were caught in bad weather with their heavy equipment in northern Louisiana, and were unable to continue payments on their equipment and were forced out of business.

When the Clark Brothers went broke, the elephant, Empress, was sold to the Harris Nickle Plate Shows, where she was heavily billed as Gypsy. Bill Woodcock said, a short time before he died, that Walter Jennier had told him about being on the Harris show as a child. Jennier reported that Empress had killed a handler, James O'Roark (Jimmy the bum), while being loaded to go to the Harris winter quarters in Valdosta, Georgia. Mrs. Harris ordered her executed, and she was taken into the swamps and shot. Jennier remembered the crowd cutting off pieces of her anatomy for souvenirs.

W. C. Clark continued in show business for a few years, sometimes calling his show Clark Bros. and sometimes W. C. Clark. His sons were associated with him at that time. After a few years he retired from show business and bought a hotel and settled in Atoka, Oklahoma, where he died in the early 1900's.

W. C. Clark had four sons. The oldest was A. T. (Alley), he was the agent of

The M. L. Clark show used the above letterhead for many years. It is very colorful. The title is in white with a red outline on a blue background. The animals are in natural colors and the circles around M. L. and Lee are in yellow. The photos of the owners are in brown. All together there are four colors. The show used this same design printed in only one color also, those in one color are much more common than the full color style.

the show and later was ahead of many small shows. A. T. was once quoted as saying, "If I had a five wagon show, I'd want three of them ahead." Lum Clark was around circuses in different capacities such as ticket seller and side show operator, all allowing him to demonstrate his ability as a fixer, grifter and short change artist par excellence. Willie was a foot juggler and aerialist and in later years was a clown on the Seils-Sterling circus and other shows in the 1930's. Lonny Clark was a general agent and fixer.

Willie spent much time around his Uncle's M. L. Clark Show, where he met and married a good looking gal named Mabel. Harry James was bandmaster on the Clark show at the time and his son, Everitt, played the cornet for his father. Willie and Mabel split up and Mabel married Everitt James. They moved on to the Mighty Haag show where Everitt James became bandmaster. It was on the Haag show that their son, Harry James, was born, now a well-known bandleader and husband of Betty Grable. Everitt James later retired from show business and taught music in Beaumont, Texas.

After the close of the Clark Bros. Circus, M. L. went out on his own, and was not associated with his brother again. He started a medicine show, with a couple of black faced comedians. They



gave a free comedy show, an old doctor pulled teeth for free and then they sold the medicine. He later bought a one horse powered merry-go-round, which had eighteen ponies. Little by little he expanded the show until 1895 when the first elephant was purchased. The elephant was Mena, and came from the Carl Hagenbeck zoo in Hamburg, Germany, along with a bactrain (two humped) camel. The elephant was small, but well trained, when she arrived in Mena, Arkansas, by train and was delivered to the Clark show.

An old trouser once told the writer, that he was on the Clark show at that time. This man reported that when they went to the baggage car to unload Mena, the punk could not be found for some time. He said Mack Clark became excited, until she was finally found behind a large piano.

Mena always had a camel with her on her walks over the road between stands, on the Clark show. She became very fond of them. The elephant was never mean, did not bolt or refuse to work. Lee Clark jokingly said, "Anytime Mena was not tied to a camel, all anyone had to do was cough and Mena came running, and it did not matter who or what was in the way, over and down it went." She was a real friend to camels.

When the show still had a bactrain camel and was playing Hemphill, a typical "hill-billy" County, in the Panhandle of Texas, about 1900 a mean drunk came on the lot. He asked what the animal was and was told it was a camel. With this information he stated that he always cut camel's throats, and proceeded to pull a long knife and cut the camel across the throat. Needless to say the animal men nearly killed the man, then called a vet to sew up the camel.

M. L. Clark decided to settle in Alexandria, Louisiana, where he bought three lots, paying \$1,200 for them. A big barn was built, with living quarters up over the front end. He later built a house. The first quarters were located on Bolton Street. The show was later moved to Monroe Street, where additional space was available with more barns and buildings. The time spent in quarters was much shorter than most shows, as the Clark show opened early and stayed out very late in the year. Often short winter tours would also be taken.

W. A. Barker, ringmaster and horse trainer on the M. L. Clark Combined Shows was shot and killed on the lot in Argentina, Arkansas, on the night of June 8, 1903. Earlier in the evening Constable E. S. Jones and two deputies went to the circus lot to serve an attachment on Mr. Clark, from a collection agency, for labor done by Henry Bradley. The man at the front door admitted he was Clark, but that he did not know Bradley, and would not pay the amount of the attachment and costs (\$11.75). The constable told Clark they would have to make a levy and proceeded toward a horse tent, after deciding that a horse would be the most convenient asset to hold. They told the men why they were there. One of the working men said, "Go ahead and take all you want, Clark's got enough money to pay for it." When they started out with a horse a man slipped up behind the constable, beating him to the ground with a heavy weapon. When he went down, his attacker, W. A. Barker, fired two

shots from a 45 pistol. By the time Barker fired his second round, Deputy Noland shot at Barker, hitting him twice. Three companions of Barker were arrested and Barker died a short time later in a hospital. Barker had been drinking during the day and looking for trouble all the while. Earlier he had pulled his gun on a man and had a fight with a Negro in a bar room. Barker had been with the Clark show for three or four years.

The ticket wagon was "plastered" and was taken to a livery stable until redeemed. The show left the next day for Jacksonville, Arkansas, after lifting the attachment and picking up the wagon.

M. L. Clark met and married the daughter of J. V. Parsons, of Frankford, Indiana. The Parsons played overland at opera houses with their white minstrel show, called "The Dora Bloom Minstrels." At the time M. L. met her the Parsons had joined out with the Clark Bros. Show. Mack and wife had four children, two sons and two daughters. They were Lee, Earl, Pearl and Edna. Lee was associated with his father in the management of the show. Earl was a victim of spinal meningitis at the age of seven and was crippled the rest of his life. Earl became a fine wood carver and did many of the carvings used on the Clark wagons. In later years he did a number of carvings for Col. Zack Miller, of the 101 Ranch Wild West.

Pearl Clark married Christopher LaComma. The LaComma Troupe had joined the Clark show and were aerialists. After she married Chris she became an aerialist, also. They did not remain in show business and M. L. staked them in buying a motion picture theatre.

Up until 1904 the Clark show was a one ringer, and then a second ring was added. At the end of the 1903 season a

This photo of the Clark show was taken in 1911 and shows the parade lining up on the lot. Four elephants and "Mose" the camel are shown. Bill Woodcock Collection.





show operated by W. F. Smith was put up for sale. The Smith show had wintered in Kansas City, where Smith owned some property. M. L. bought some trained horses and a young bull by the name of "Ned." Dan Leon, a prominent horse trainer, had trained Ned and the ponies for the Smith show. We know of no other elephants trained by Leon, but he did a good job on Ned, who was well trained. The Smith show started out in 1898. In 1901 it was called the "Great Syndicate Shows," in 1902 it was the "Great Eastern Shows" and in 1903 it carried the "Howes Great London" title. (This was not the E. G. Smith show of that period.) The Smith circus was a small railroader of about ten cars. It was a strong rip and tear grifting outfit. A small performing elephant was the only bull listed in the ads, which would have been Ned.

Jerry Mugivan and Bert Bowers had the privileges on the Howes show in 1903, and they purchased a large amount of the equipment from Smith and this was the basis of their Great Van Amberg show of 1904.

M. L. Clark and Ernest Haag went to the St. Louis World's Fair at the close of the 1904 season and made a joint purchase of twelve camels. These were from the Carl Hagenbeck Trainer Animal Exhibit at the fair. "Mose" was one of the six camels that Clark received in the deal. Mose was the camel that traveled over the road with Mena, until the Clark show went off the road many years later. The twelve camels were shipped in one lot to Alexandria and with them came ornate four passenger saddles. There is no record, but it would probably be safe to assume that some of these camels were sold by Clark shortly after receiving them.

Bill Woodcock once told the writer that some of the old animal men at Lan-

"Old Badger," the elephant man, is shown seated on Ned's tusks with Mena alongside. Author's Collection.



caster, Missouri, told him that William P. Hall bought his first two elephants from Hagenbeck at the end of the 1904 season. The two were "Duke" and "Mary."

M. L. Clark had a reputation for treating his help well and especially he was not cruel to the roustabouts, which was common practice on other shows of the period. The show always had a good cookhouse. Although it was not "high fare," it was at least plentiful, which counts with the working men.

Some of the performers on the Clark show over the years were: The Albert Powell Family, The Jennier Family, The Ed Millette Family, Archie Silverlake, Bert Dearo, The LaComma Troupe, The Miller Family of Acrobats, The Aerial Demars and the Grant Family, to mention only a few. Some of these acts were with the show for four or five years, which indicates fair treatment and steady work.

In 1907 the title was changed from M. L. Clark Combined Shows to M. L. Clark and Sons Combined Shows and Trained Animal Exhibition. M. L. and son, Lee, worked as a team. M. L. was up early each morning and moved the show off the lot and Lee stayed up late at night and oversaw the teardown.

One of the vehicles on the show was a "carry all bus," that transported the "stags," single male performers and bandmen. As a rule no performers slept on the lot. The advance agent contracted for the bed and breakfast for the performers at a local hotel. The carry all, with its four horse hitch, took them to the hotel and then on to the lot. Lee Clark said in the old days, the price at a hotel was two beds and two breakfasts for a dollar. He said there was an expression used in contracting for lodging, "a quarter a head and two heads to a bed."

A family might have a two seat surrey, a man and wife a one horse rig, depending on their station and luggage. The Powell Family, for instance, had a sleeper and their own horses, which were boarded

by the show. The Powells did sleep on the lot.

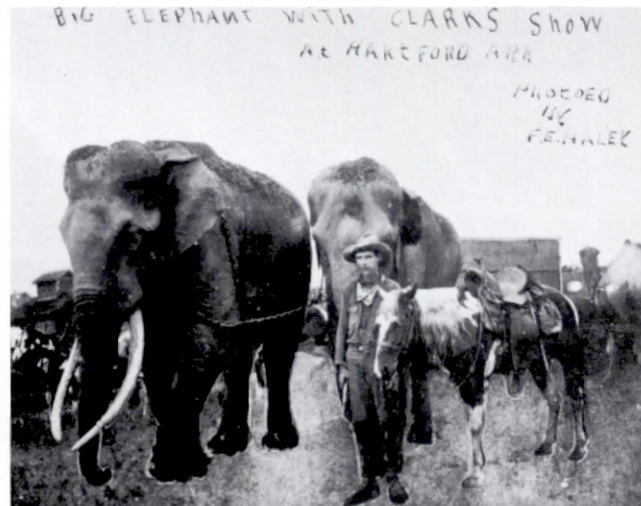
In the days when the show was at its peak, it was called "The Largest Wagon Show on the Road." On the advance, the billing wagon was big and ornate, and looked much like a bandwagon. It carried a driver and a bill poster and required a four horse hitch. There were also two one horse spring wagons used for country billing as well as two one horse buggies for the billposters. The General Agent had a snappy two horse buggy for his work. All together there were ten head of horses on the advance.

Around 1915 the show bought a chain driven model "T" run-about with solid rubber tires, for the billing. A paper box was fastened to the rear end, along with a paste barrel. There were not many mechanics in those days and the rig broke down in Kentucky and was left behind, and the advance crew went back to their old reliable wagons. You just could not talk trucks to Mack Clark and the show was never motorized prior to his death, and then not completely.

Lee Clark said the show used lye and not steam paste for posting their paper. Lye paste was prepared by putting lye in a wooden barrel until it boiled and then flour or starch was added. Title and date streamers one sheet high were carried and any combination of sheets could be posted to fit a "daub." A real country posting layout, or board fence daub was a work of art by an experienced bill poster.

When opposition shows came into the territory the advance sometimes pasted the title and dates over the pictorial paper of the rival show. Some times rival advance men would "con" a loafer or a child into stealing the bill posters brushes by telling them the location of the unguarded brushes and promising them a couple of passes, if they would "fetch"

Ned, the tusker elephant, is shown on the left next to Mena, in a 1921 photo. Chalmer Condon Collection.





"their" brushes for them. A good camel hair brush with a 12 or 14 foot hickory handle cost a good deal of money even then, and a billposter was lost without his brush.

If the squeeze in the area became great enough, the show would sometimes "smallpox" the opposition by whispering the word that the rival show was carrying four or six cases of smallpox on it. Usually this was enough to bring fighters from the other show and a "donnybrook" ensued. Fights between billing crews were not at all uncommon.

When the title was changed in 1907 the Clarks bought a huge lot of specially designed paper from the Donaldson Lithograph Co. Most of the colorful designs included a picture of M. L. and Lee. A sample of this special Donaldson paper appeared on the cover of the September-October, 1964, issue of the Bandwagon. Other designs are shown as illustrations for this article. The show also used paper from Riverside Printing Co., of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the Erie Printing Co. The show usually ordered 100,000 sheets and had them shipped along the route as needed.

During the 1907-1908 season the Clark show and the other big southern wagon show, Mighty Haag, bucked each other playing day and date in Salyerville, Kentucky. Business was good for both shows, but after the tear down, both shows had to leave town on the same road. This resulted in a wild mixup of equipment. Baggage wagons, parade pieces and walking stock were intermingled along a long stretch of Kentucky's flint rock road. It was a good thing there was no bad blood between the shows.

On another occasion the Clark show and the John H. Sparks circus played Abbeville, Alabama, on the same day. They combined both shows and split the gate fifty-fifty. Since their tents were the same size, they used one show's big top, combined the menageries, pooled the performers and put on a real big show.

Early in the spring of 1908 M. L. purchased two baby elephants from Louis Rhue, of New York City. These were a male named "Tony" and a female named "Babe." They were not trained and for the whole season they were hauled over the roads in a wagon pulled by four mules.

The peak years for the Clark show were 1908 and 1909. They had at that time about 12 cages of animals and about 60 wagons and 200 horses. They carried two large horse tents. One for the trained horses and those that pulled the cages. Another was used for the mules that pulled the baggage wagons.

In the spring of 1909 the Clark show opened on rails, but ended the season by returning to the quarters as a wagon show. According to a Billboard report in the April 10, 1909, issue, the train consisted of one coach, one baggage car,



This is the only known photo of the coach used on the Floyd and Howard King 1922 Clark three car show. Author's Collection.

three flats and two stock cars. That same season the Mighty Haag show went on rails, using 10 cars. The Haag show remained on rails throughout the 1914 season. Other small rail shows on tour in 1909 were Welsh Bros. on 8 cars; Dode Fisk, on 11; Rice Bros. on 12; Gentry No. 1 show, on 10; Gentry No. 2 show, on 9, and John H. Sparks on 7 cars. That same season the Barnum & Bailey show moved on 84 cars and Ringling on 81. The Two Bills show used 48 cars and Hagenbeck Wallace was on 45.

Lee Clark advises that some of the equipment for the rail show came from the Ringling Bros. in a \$6,000 deal. The purchase included two discarded Forepaugh-Sells tourist pullmans. One car was from the Alex Glasscock Circus, which was dubbed "Noahs Ark." One end of this car carried the four elephants, four camels and the shetland ponies. The other end had the privileges and four high bunks for a considerable number of people. There were also two rented Arms Palace stock cars carrying 20 horses each.

After traveling on rails from April to July and going broke in Olathe, Kansas, they returned to moving the show overland. They had been losing money since the beginning of the season. The Clarks managed to save the property in Alexandria, Louisiana, and still had the four elephants, some of the wagons, teams and a few other animals, according to Lee. However his memory may be a bit mixed up as the Clark rail equipment was listed for sale in the September 24, 1910, issue of the Billboard. The advertisement listed for sale: two 64 foot pullman sleepers; one 60 foot baggage car; three 60 foot flats, one tableau band wagon, carved; three baggage wagons; one pole wagon. The ad stated that the equipment could be seen at any time on the tracks and in quarters in Alexandria. The November 12, 1910, issue of the Billboard reported that Thomas F. Wiedemann had purchased six rail cars and seven baggage wagons from M. L. Clark for the Kit Carson Buffalo Ranch Wild West Show.

The question of exactly which years the Clark show was on rails is difficult to answer. The show ran an advertise-

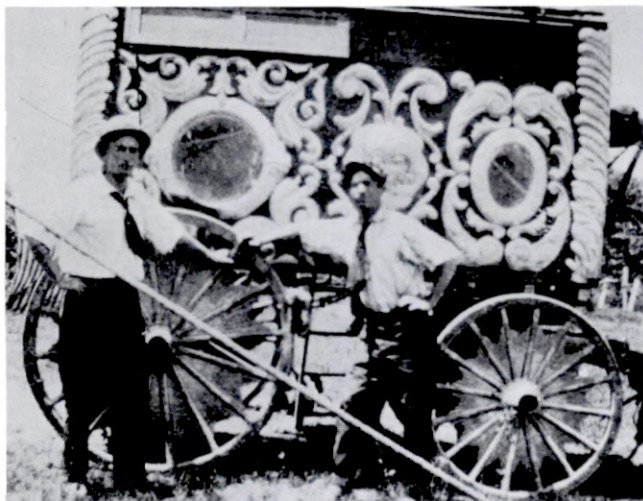
ment in the March 16, 1907, Billboard, listing for sale two 50 foot baggage cars, one tableau band wagon and one baggage wagon, all built for railroad show. The ad continues saying that they would trade for anything suitable for a wagon show. This would indicate that the Clarks had purchased some rail equipment, even if not actually used by them prior to 1909.

The 1910 season opened on March 7 and 8, in Alexandria. A note in the March 19, 1910, Billboard reported that the show was carrying a 120 foot round top, with five 45 foot middles; eighteen cages of wild animals and 210 horses, four elephants and eight camels. A combined circus and wild west show was presented during the 1910 season. It ran all season, but M. L. did not like it, because of the cowboys "ripped-up" the show's horses. The wild west was discontinued the next season.

A number of cowboys were still with the show when it closed and this prompted Lee Clark to take out a wild west for the 1911 season. This show was titled "Clark's Circle C Wild West show," and was separate from the Clark circus that M. L. had out as usual. The Circle C Wild West also had some circus acts and Lee reported that he had Ned, the elephant with him, while M. L. had Mena and Babe on the circus. The wild west show traveled on 25 wagons with about 60 head of horses. The show used an "L" shaped canopy, requiring few poles, with the rest of the arena being side walled. Lee's cousin, "Alley" Clark, was general agent.

S. J. Arnold, an old time cowboy, who said he was with the Circle C for a few weeks before it closed, in an interview with the writer reported a little different description than the one above from Lee Clark. Arnold said he joined the show in Fenton, Louisiana, on March 7, and that the season closed on April 8, in Robson, Louisiana. The show moved back to the Alexandria quarters on April 9, which would indicate the show was on a winter tour only. Arnold remem-





The ticket wagon on the Clark show in 1916. Bill Miller, a performer, is shown at left. Bill Woodcock Collection.

bered the show carrying about 35 horses and using 10 wagons. One wagon was on the advance. He said the canopy had red and blue tier seats, used a cook house top, a pad room and several small sleeping tents. There was a side show and about an eight piece band. Bill Woodcock said he had always understood that Ned was with the Circle C, but Arnold said he does not remember any elephants with the show.

The Billboard reported conflicting dates on the opening of the Clark circus in 1911. The April 22, 1911, issue stated that the Clark show opened on March 18 and that it was triple its former size and carried fifteen cages of animals, four elephants and five camels. It also reported 65 wagons and 175 horses. These reports were not entirely accurate, and it is evident that there is further conflict between Lee Clark's memory and the Billboard report, because of the overlapping of the dates the two shows were touring and the number of elephants on the Clark circus.

The 1912 season saw the show continuing on wagons. It headed west getting to Needles, California, late in the year. Some system railroad cars were rented there and a few stands were made back to Dona Ana County, New Mexico, where they wintered.

That winter Lee reported he matched Ned for a fight with a Mexican bull in the bull ring at Juarez, Old Mexico, on February 2, 1913. He was to get \$2,500, and movies were to be taken, and Clark was to get a print of the films. Five bulls were run out and none would fight Ned. The Mexicans did not like that and the films were confiscated by police. Clark was to be fined \$500, but he sneaked across the bridge to El Paso, Texas, during the night with Ned.

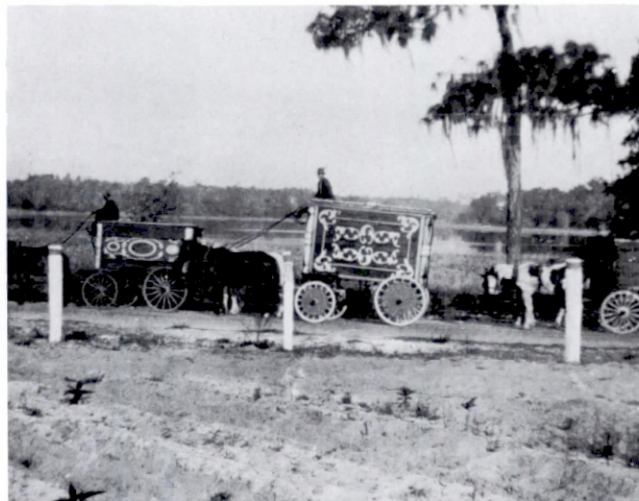
In January of 1913 the young bull, Babe, along with two camels and a

llama, were sold to the Al G. Barnes show, leaving only two on the Clark show. After going to the Barnes show her name was changed to Pearl.

For many years an old colored man with a white mustache cared for the Clark elephants. His name was Bill Badger, and was called "Old Badger." Badger had been on the Sells Bros. Circus in the late 1800's and was listed in the Sells route books as William Badger, head elephant man. Badger was with Clark in Mexico for the fight. For years the Negro traveled over the road with the Clark elephants riding a spotted horse named "Robert." Badger died around 1915.

Milt Hinkle was also on the Clark show at various times between 1912 and 1915. Milt usually went to the Clark show in the fall after the close of the wild west shows, either working at the quarters or on winter tours in the south. He worked in different capacities, such as lot superintendent, boss hostler and sometimes presented a wild west concert.

Lee Clark as he looks at age 76, photo taken in November, 1964. Author's Collection.



This very fine photo shows the Clark show moving overland, the ticket wagon is in the center. Taken about 1927 by Chief Clarence Keys, who was with the show that year.

Al F. Wheeler, a well known circus operator, started his first show on four wagons and built it up during the early 1900's. In 1916 he toured a large railroad circus, reported by some to have been as large as 25 or 30 cars. In his early days Wheeler had a small highly carved ticket wagon. He took this wagon with him to the Rose Killian wagon show, where he had the concessions and was assistant manager. Wheeler later went to the Clark show, taking the wagon with him. M. L. finally purchased the wagon and it remained with the Clark show until it was worn out. Wheeler was associated with Andrew Downie and toured the Downie & Wheeler circus from 1911 to 1913. Wheeler sometimes used the name Frank Belmont and used the Belmont Bros. title on occasion.

About midseason of 1921, the Clark show sold the big male tusker, Ned, to Al G. Barnes. Ned was loaded in a baggage car on July 3, 1921, in Seligman, Missouri, and shipped to the Barnes show, which was playing in Minnesota at the time. After going to the Barnes show the elephant's name was changed to "Tusko." Lee Clark reports that Barnes paid \$6,000 cash for the bull. The writer considers the sale of Ned as the beginning of the end of the Clark show. (See the article on Ned and Mena in the November-December, 1958, issue of Bandwagon.)

Some people refer to Ned/Tusko as a killer elephant, but no one knows of any one he killed. It is true that after getting to the Barnes show the elephant did get unmanageable at times and was left in quarters parts of some season. He was kept well chained. There are photos of him wearing a "martingale" on the Clark show, which would indicate he was on the rough side while still on that show. But Lee Clark said he only wore this





The M. L. Clark lithographs were some of the finest ever used by a wagon show. The special designs were made by the Donaldson

Lithograph Co. The stock sheets are from Riverside Printing Co. Posters are from the Pfening Collection.





The marquee and ticket wagon shown on the lot around 1927. This is the Al F. Wheeler wagon. Photo by Chief Keys.

during his "must" season. Handlers had to watch him when he swung his head and kept away from his tusks at such times. Lee says the only person injured by Ned on the Clark show was Willie Clark, who was hit by a tusk and received a broken rib.

In 1922, M. L. Clark leased the Clark title to Floyd and Howard King. The Kings had used the Great Sanger title on a three car show in 1921. M. L. Clark brought one elephant, a camel, 2 lions, 14 ponies, a puma, and some monkeys with him to the King winter quarters in Memphis, Tennessee. The show used a baggage car, a coach and a combination sleeper and cook and dining car. The baggage car carried all the animals and equipment, and was originally on the John H. Sparks three car show. There were four small cages of animals and a ticket wagon as well as "known down" wagons used to gilly the canvas, poles, seats and other equipment from the train to the lot and back. Also on the baggage car were some trained ponies, dogs and a few head of draft horses used to pull the wagons.

For 35 fares, for a distance of 50 miles or more, the railroad would haul a baggage car, as part of a passenger train. Lee Clark says the working men were good at hiding themselves aboard and that far more men were carried than were reported. The railroads were up to such tricks and were good at checking for the extra deadheads, and when extras were found the show had to pay up.

Mr. Clark said that when the show was in mountainous areas on short line railroads one engine sometimes could not pull the three heavy cars along with the regular train. On at least one occasion it was necessary to use an engine to pull the single heavily loaded baggage

car, causing some wag to remark that it was the first time he had seen a three car show moving in two sections.

The writer saw the 1922 Clark show in Wellston, Ohio, on August 10 and remembers it as a circus of sideshows. It had no parade, but they did walk Mena and Mose, the camel, up town, and also presented a free exhibition on the lot every half hour. The free act consisted of a man or woman coming out to the ticket box with a large snake around their waists and shoulders, or a ventriloquist with a knee figure. There were two or three pit shows with snakes and small animals. A regular side show was on the midway with a colorful bannerline illustrating fire eaters, fat people and the usual stock kid show attractions.

The show advertised having "a whole city of canvas," and there was plenty of canvas, making the lot look like a county fair, with side shows and concession stands seemingly everywhere. The show carried a band of about five pieces that went from pit show to pit show making openings at each.

Lee Clark reports that M. L. and the Kings split fifty-fifty on the winnings. No mention was made as to whether this was on the first or second count. The advance of the show was called a "box brigade," with the crew moving their brushes, paste barrels and hods of paper as baggage in boxes on regular trains using "show script." After arriving in a town the crew checked into a local hotel and then hired a spring wagon from a local livery stable and started plastering the town.

Wellston was well papered with color-

ful billing stands and most of the windows were filled with lithographs. One daub can be remembered showing a big bull tusker covered with chains and a smaller bull by his side and a baby elephant in the center. It said "Mena, The Largest Elephant in Captivity." The name Mena was pasted over another name, suggesting that the show was using up some paper from the year before, when Ned was used on that piece of paper. Bill Woodcock once commented, "One thing that show did have was beautiful paper."

M. L. accompanied the show that year, keeping an eye on his stock, and the office wagon. Lee remained in Alexandria and later framed a minstrel show.

The 1922 show closed after a long season on November 28, in Arkansas. Bill Woodcock said he understood that M. L. left Alexandria after the closing for a "southern winter tour" on wagons.

In the early 1920's Lum Clark was working on the show as a "patch" (fixer) and ran into some trouble, in a little town near Lexington, Kentucky. A townner was helping raise the center poles when a guy line snapped causing the pole to fall while the man still had it on his shoulder. He was pushed to the ground and the pole broke his neck, killing him.

The young man's father happened to be on the lot at the time. M. L. told Lum to get the father and keep him away from a lawyer, who would surely bring a plaster service. Accordingly Lum found the father and took him off in a rig to Lexington and bought him a suit of clothes and then proceeded to make the rounds of local saloons. However Lum got drunk and lost the man, who contacted a mouthpiece at once. The lawyer attached the show for \$25,000. In Kentucky the law allowed the owners to be attached, not the show. The state line was a full day's journey away. M. L. hid out while Lee hid on the show in order to move it over the state line. They decided to make a run for it, but between them and the state line was the town billed for the next day.

As they fled through the next day's town, they told people they had split the show and that the second half would be along to make the date. While they were still a mile or so from the state line a sheriff and a band of men rode up and stopped them. The sheriff served the attachment and held the show.

About that time Art Godfrey, from the show, appeared on the scene. Godfrey was a loud mouth, with plenty of gall. He demanded to see the paper. Looking at the paper he said, "Hell, any D—— fool in the state of Kentucky knows this paper is no good," and so saying proceeded to tear the paper up and throw it to the ground, at the same time signaling the lead driver to get





A general view of the Clark show on the lot at Robinsville, N.C., on August 22, 1925. Author's Collection.

moving, making a run to the neighboring state. The trip was a wild, fast and rough one on the horses and wagons, and the show laid off, blowing the next three stands, making repairs and resting the stock.

Naturally they stayed out of Kentucky for several years, but in 1927 they changed the title to Rogers Bros. Circus, while playing the same territory.

M. L. Clark died at Alexandria, Louisiana, on October 4, 1926, at the age of 69 years. His daughter, Pearl LaComma, age 36, died on February 1, 1927, in San Antonio, Texas.

At the time of M. L. Clark's death the show was still a full fledged wagon show, actually the last of the wagon shows. After his death some trucks were added for the cook house, poles, sleeper, baggage truck and light plant. It was still risky business touring over land in trucks along the mountain roads where the Clark title was best known. As the roads improved more trucks were added. During the late 1920's the show's most advertised drawing cards were Mena, "The Largest Elephant in Captivity, Weight 12,000 pounds," Mose, "The Biggest Camel on Earth," and Barney, "The Largest and most ferocious black maned African lion."

Lee Clark continued to tour the show until August, 1930. While the show was tottering on its last legs through the

The last remains of the 1945 E. E. Coleman M. L. Clark motorized circus shown in 1953 at the Prescott, Arkansas, fairgrounds. Bill Woodcock Photo.



mountains of Virginia and Maryland, he went broke and had to sell the show.

E. E. Coleman, of Dayton, Ohio, had been in show business and owned some theatres. He heard of the show and sent Coonie Malone, as his representative to buy the show. At the time the show was moving by horses, mules and trucks. Malone took possession of the show in Brunswick, Maryland, and shipped it back to Ohio.

Malone got the show on the road again in Ohio, for Coleman, and stayed as manager for the rest of the 1930 season. Coleman had the show out for a year or two and later leased some of the elephants to other shows, but never had any real success with the show. Old Mose, the camel, died in the Coleman quarters and Mena was sold to the Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. Circus in 1940. Mena died on the Kelly-Miller show, on October 25, 1943, in Waurike, Oklahoma. (The date listed in Milt Hinkle article in the November-December, 1964, Bandwagon was not correct.)

Earl Clark died in 1936 and Lee Clark now lives in semi-retirement at his farm home on Old Boyce Road, out of Alexandria, Louisiana. He has always been interested in horses and now has a hobby of raising and selling horses now and then. Mr. Clark says you have no idea how far it is from Louisiana to Colorado until you have ridden a horse there and back.

The Alexandria Daily Town Talk carried a story in November, 1964, titled the "Lee Clark-Milt Hinkle Story." It told of Lee first seeing Milt when he returned from South America and came to the Clark quarters where M. L. hired him as boss hostler. It told of Lee's correspondence with old troupers, including

Milt. Lee is now 76 and Uncle Milt is 83. The article closed by suggesting a reunion of the two for a last get-together before the show closes for both of them.

The last season that the M. L. Clark title was on the road was 1945. E. E. Coleman had toured the show in 1943 and perhaps 1944. The 1945 edition was on about ten trucks and opened on May 5, 1945, in Eaton, Ohio. After a twenty-two week season the show closed on October 4, in Jonesboro, Louisiana. The equipment was returned to the winter quarters in Prescott, Arkansas. The show did not tour again and as late as 1953 the trucks and equipment were still rotting away at the fairgrounds in Prescott. E. E. Coleman still has the air calliope which is probably the last remains of the Clark equipment.

(I am thankful for the notes left me by the late Col. Bill Woodcock, and this article is dedicated to Bill. I also appreciate the help and information that came from Lee Clark, Leonard Farley, Don Carson, S. J. Arnold and especially the cooperation and effort by Frank Robie.)

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# Truth or Fiction

## Legend or Fact

By PIERRE COUDERC

### INSTALLMENT No. 7 THE TEETERBOARD (LA BASCULE)

"In acrobatics, as in architecture, the constructive principle is basic and inherent in the conception and in the performance."

Irving K. Pond

For reasons difficult to fathom some circophiles seem to hold to the erroneous notion that "evolution" is synonymous with "progress." That is not true. Of course, there are instances when it is; other times, not. As commented upon in previous installments of this series, evolution was synonymous with progress as regards the flying trapezes. But that same evolution also brought about a marked decline in risley and an almost complete decadence in the horizontal bars. Naturally, as in all various phases of life, there is always a "balance." What may be lost on one side of the ledger is usually compensated by a gain on another side. In the circus ring, there is one "plus" which can be reported in one phase of acrobatics: The progress which performers have registered since the innovation of "The Teeterboard."

A Faybry's teeterboard act with Ringling Barnum featuring Fay Alexander, Reggie Armor and Bob Yerkes. Fay Alexander Collection.



To be sure, the particular progress in that field isn't going to be any comfort to some of the "old-timers," who continue to bemoan the dearth of "pure acrobaticism" in our circus rings. As far as they are concerned, they regard the teeterboard as a form of "trickery." To such, the teeterboard is merely a "gimmick" whereby an acrobat is imparted an artificial momentum with which he can effortlessly accomplish certain spectacular routines which he would not be capable of executing without the device. Such "purists" keep insisting that no teeterboard number, either past or present, can begin to compare with the feats presented by such famous old troupes as the Mansurys, Craggs, Bourbonels, Montrose, Heras, Yulians, Millettes and many others "shoulder-to-shoulder" and "hand-to-hand" performers too numerous to mention.

Speaking strictly in terms of "pure acrobatics," there is "some" truth to their contentions. When one recalls the astounding feats of The Millettes, with Ernest executing a forward from a 3-high column to land onto a 2-high and form another 3-high; or the same Ernie turning a forward-double "spotter" from Al's shoulders—to land back on the same Al's shoulders, it becomes obvious that such feats are deserving of more appreciation than a triple turned from a teeterboard!

When one has witnessed Beby Frediani "pitching" Rene into a double to Willy's shoulders, from which the latter would throw his top-mounter into a double-spotter to return to the same shoulders—and thence into another double to the ground, one begins to wonder what such artists might have been able to accomplish with the help of a teeterboard!

That same speculation would also apply to The Heras or Montrose Troupes, each of whom, from a 3-high column, had the middleman turn a forward to the ground, while the top-mounter executed a "double back-spotter" to land on the shoulders of the understander.

As George Gobel would be prone to quip: "Them things you just ain't seein' no more!"

Except for the Nicolodis, an Italian troupe consisting of 4 girl top-mounters and 2 men understanders, "carpet acrobatics" are almost a thing of the past. Obviously, the "purists" can point with pride to the fact that The Nicolodis can execute routines that warms their hearts.

Among some of their routines is one wherein one of the understanders pitches one of the girl top-mounters into a back to a 3-high column. Another is a full twister from a 3-high to a 2-high on the shoulders of the underman; and also a long series of full twistings by one of the girls from the "basket-hold" of the 2 understanders.

To be sure—especially considering that the top-mounters of the Nicolodis are girls—this act is really a unique number which deserves all the applause it usually generates from the audience. And to be sure, the "purists" contentions have "some" validity. But what they fail to recognize and are unwilling to concede is that the teeterboard has brought "variety" and additional dimensions for the pleasure of the spectators.

The average circus buff can't be expected to recognize and appreciate the difficulties involved in the performances of such feats accomplished by the Millettes, Fredianis, Montroses or Nicolodis. To him, a pitched-double to the shoulders can never look as difficult as Sylvester Mezetti turning a quadruple to a seat on the shoulders of his understander—or one of the Picchianis doing a back to a 4-high column—or one of the Yacopis doing the same to a 5-high (\*1).

No doubt Ernie Millette or Rene Frediani could have done either. But that should not detract from the fact that teeterboard performers have contributed countless thrills and spectacular feats which, though perhaps easier to execute, have just been as dangerous—and much more dazzling to witness!

One question which has bothered many historians over the years is: Who was the

The Stanecks. The top-mounter executing a back from a basket hold on a two high. Fay Alexander Collection.





first performer to create this innovation? — and when and where? There have been many answers — with most of them being more fiction than facts.

In his "l'Acrobatie et les Acrobates," G. Strehly, one of the first circus historians of note, makes a lengthy report about a contrivance called a "patauron" being already in existence in the early 1800's. According to Strehly, this "patauron" was either an ordinary springboard or a catapult with a spring. The first specimen seen by Strehly was at the Vienna Imperial Zirkus in 1873 — and consisted of a square plank resting on a powerful coil spring. Lulu, a female gymnast, stood on the contrivance while someone activated the release of the spring — and the sudden detente sent the performer vertically into the air to catch a trapeze anchored above her.

Research fails to unearth any further account on the subject until Henry Thetard, in his "Merveilleuse Histoire du Cirque!", credits the Germans, Walpert and Paulan, for the creation around the turn of the century. Considering that Thetard is renowned for his thorough research and reporting accuracy, his meager and rather vague report would indicate that he, too, was unable to pinpoint the true facts.

Obviously, there are some missing links between Strehly's and Thetard's accounts. There is also a gap between the Walpert and Paulan type of performance and that of some of the troupes which started putting the teeterboard into usage in the late 1890's and early 1900's. Old photos of the Walpert and Paulan number establish the fact that they used a contrivance similar but smaller than a teeterboard. However, from the position of said board and its relationship to the platform from which a performer leaps down onto the other end of the board, it would indicate that the contrivance was more of a "springboard" than actually a "teeterboard."

Whether or not Walpert and Paulan

were the originators can never be ascertained. One thing is sure, they did not perform the kind of feats now executed by the customary teeterboard number — for the Walpert and Paulan routines consisted more of hand and head balancing routines than the "somersaulting" routines which became the "standard" with most teeterboard numbers. Moreover, inasmuch as Walpert and Paulan were a team of two performers, the question comes to mind: Who was the third performer to jump from the pedestal to the one end of the teeterboard in order to project Paulan into his trajectory to land into a one-hand-stand on the head of Walpert?

When one ponders over an answer to the question, it becomes obvious that it is more likely that Walpert and Paulan could *not* have been using a teeterboard — but a springboard. And if one takes into consideration the fact that the big springboard (la batoude) had already been in existence since the early 1800's, which antedates the Walpert and Paulan



The Great Faludy's, executing a four high from the teeterboard. Burt Wilson Collection.

innovation by almost a century, then it is also more likely that the Walpert and Paulan creation was a simple evolution from the big springboard to a smaller but similar contrivance.

Diligent and considerable research was pursued in order to determine exactly who and when were the first performers to execute "somersaulting" routines from a teeterboard. But thus far it has been impossible to sift the facts from the fiction. Even the oldest of the "old-timers" among professionals, either here or abroad, cannot name who came first.

Ben Beno (a contemporary of the Silbons, Millettes and Seigrists) is of the

opinion that a certain Fred Lamonte is the creator of not only the teeterboard but also the modern trampoline. According to Beno, the La Belle Carmen Troupe, which Fred Lamonte presented at the Wallace Bros. Circus in 1898, antedates the advent of the Yacopis, Glinserettis, and Picchianis. At least in the States. On the other hand, the present chief of the Hungarian State Cirkusz, M. Gondor (once a member of the original 7 Magyars, famous as one of the early teeterboard numbers in Europe), credits the Austrian Glinseretti Troupe as the creators.

Jimmie Picchiani, also one of the early exponents of the teeterboard (now still living in New York at the age of 83) opines that the Gondor assertion could be true. Personally, he cannot recall with any degree of certainty which was the first number of that type he ever witnessed before himself and/or the Yacopis.

A great number of what can be termed "real old-timers" were contacted over a long period of time — but not a single one was capable of coming up with the answer with any degree of certainty. Inasmuch as, deplorably, past circus historians failed to record any of the facts regarding who was the creator of this innovation and when and where, by now the question will probably remain unanswered forever.

The only thing that can be reported with certainty is that, during the late 1890's and early 1900's, some of the great acrobatic troupes of the period remained "purists" and others, quickly sensing the possibility of more spectacular routines, wasted no time in switching from their old "ground-and-shoulder" routines to the high-lofting ones of the teeterboard.

At the time, such famous troupes as The Millettes, Heras, Montrose, Craggs, Bourbonnel, and a host of others too numerous to mention, remained "purists" and continued with their "carpet acts" — while others such as the Glinserettis, Mezettis, Yacopis, Picchianis, and countless others, found it expedient to adopt the teeterboard.

By 1910, the traditional "ground-and-shoulder" acrobatics of the "carpet number" was gradually disappearing from our circus rings — and being replaced by countless teeterboard numbers, presenting spectacular routines which would have been impossible to execute by sheer muscular strength.

The above should not be construed as an implication that teeterboard performers are less gifted artists than their predecessors. Far from it! As a matter of fact, all teeterboard performers must possess all of the qualifications necessary for "ground-and-shoulder" acrobatics before venturing on a teeterboard. Whether he be a top-mounter, middleman or understander, every member of a teeterboard troupe has to be a master of basic

#### FOOTNOTE:

(\*1): This "5-high" of The Yacopis should be qualified, inasmuch as this was not truly a "column" — but a "pyramid." Factually, it consisted of 3 understanders on the ground, on the shoulders of which stood 3 more understanders, on the shoulders of which rested a "cradle." On the center of the said cradle stood one middleman, on whose shoulders stood a top-midman — on whose shoulders landed the top-mounter. Considering that it took two men to jump from the pedestal to the other end of the board; and a minimum of two more men to stand on the alert as "spotters" at the foot of the pyramid, ready to break the fall of the top-mounter in case of a miss, no troupe with less than a personnel of 13 performers could ever hope to duplicate this unique and spectacular feat.



# Some Interesting Lithos from the P. M. McClintock Collection

This interesting group of lithographs from the Barnum & London show present likenesses of many of the famous parade wagons with that show during the middle 1880's. A brief history of the wagons pictured follows.

Photo No. 1. Foreground. This wagon was built in England for the Howes Great London show in 1871. It, along with the rest of the Howes show, was sold to the Cooper & Bailey Circus in 1878. It went to the Barnum show by way of the combine of that show with Cooper & Bailey.

Photo No. 2. Background. This wagon is known to have been on the Barnum & London show as early as 1883. It may have been on the L. B. Lent show in the 1870's, but this is just a theory. Foreground. This wagon was built for the Van Amburgh Circus in 1866 by the Fielding Wagon Company of New York City. It was on the Howes Great London show during the middle 1870's, and was sold to the Cooper & Bailey show in 1878. It went to the Barnum show by way of the combine of 1881. It may have been sold to either W. L. Main or W. P. Hall in 1904 or 1905. One theory puts this wagon on the Barton & Bailey show in 1915 and on the Orton Bros. Circus in 1916. It was definitely on the Rhoda Royal in 1920 to 1922. It is then lost along with the rest of the Royal show equipment. Both of these wagons were in Europe with the Barnum show.

Photo No. 3. Background. This wagon is the Neptune Chariot from the original Barnum show of the 1870's. It was destroyed in the Bridgeport winterquarters fire on November 20, 1887. This picture of the Neptune wagon

is very fanciful compared to what the wagon really looked like. Foreground. This is the Barnum organ wagon. It was known to be on the Barnum show as early as 1879 and was in Europe with that show. It was later rebuilt with the top organ part being removed. It appeared on the Miller Bros. & Arlington 101 Ranch Wild West in the 1910's and on the Jess Willard-Buffalo Bill Wild West in 1917. Starting in 1922 this wagon was on the Christy show and remained on that show until its closing. It was also on the Christy owned Lee Bros. Circus in the middle 1920's. And was part of the equipment purchased by Ken Maynard for his short lived Wild West show in 1936. It was parked at the Bradley & Kaye amusement park until it was purchased by Walt Disney, and to the best of our knowledge is still at Disneyland.

Photo No. 4. Background. This is the Barnum show tableau No. 50. It later was on Fred Buchanan's Yankee Robinson show in the 1910's. Foreground. This is tableau No. 49. It later appeared on the F. A. Robbins Circus during the 1910's. Both these wagons were in the old world with the Barnum show.

Photo No. 5. Background. This is tableau No. 51. It was on the Yankee Robinson show during the 1910's. It was in Europe with the Barnum show. Foreground. This is the only wagon in this set of which there is no definite proof of being on the Barnum show during this era. Some reports indicate that possibly this wagon was sold to the John Robinson Circus by the Barnum show sometime before 1900. This wagon, or one that looks just like it, appears in a 1905 John Robinson picture.

The wagon on the Robinson show was sold to the Veal Bros. Carnival in 1919.

Photo No. 6. Background. This is the Barnum & London Bell Wagon. The two front statues from this wagon are now in Baraboo. Foreground. This is the Barnum show calliope. One theory puts this wagon on the F. A. Robbins show in the 1910's, but this theory is not subscribed to by all historians. This illustration of the calliope is a poor one.

Photo No. 7. Background. This is the Howes Great London Dragon Float. It was built in England for the Howes Great London show in 1871. Sold to the Cooper & Bailey show in 1878 and got to the Barnum show by way of the Cooper & Bailey show and the Barnum show combining in 1881. It remained on the Barnum show until that show combined with the Ringling Bros. Circus in 1919. It was used in Ringling-Barnum specs until 1937.

Photo No. 8. Both of the wagons in this photo were built for Howes Great London in England in 1871. Both were originally telescopes. The wagon pictured in the background of this litho was called the Chariot of Commerce, but it now is commonly referred to as the Howes Globe Tableau. This wagon went to the Barnum show by way of the combine of 1881 with the Cooper & Bailey show. The globe top part was removed about 1891. It was on Forepaugh-Sells from 1896 until approximately 1906. Definite trace of this wagon ends about 1906. The wagon in the foreground was called the War Chariot of India, or the Howes Elephant Tableau. This wagon has the same history as the Howes Globe wagon.

All of the wagons shown in these lithographs, except the Neptune and the calliope, give an accurate representation of the Barnum & London parade of the middle 1880's. The lithographs of the Howes Great London shows of the 1860's and 1870's also showed accurate illustrations of the wagons of that show.

Any corrections, verifications of theories, or additional information will be greatly appreciated. — Fred (Rick) Pfening

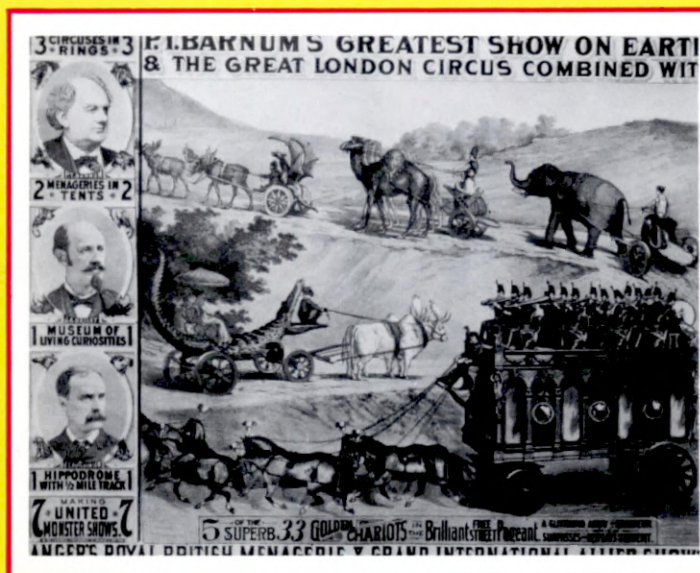


Photo No. 1

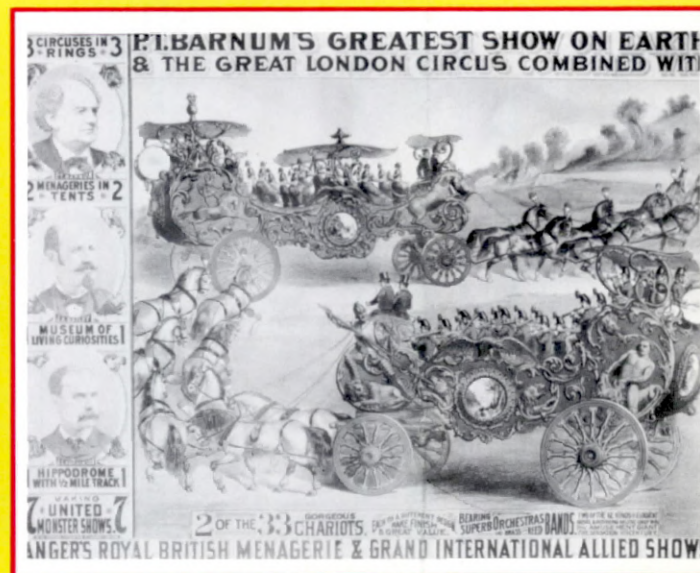


Photo No. 2





Photo No. 3



Photo No. 4



Photo No. 5



Photo No. 6

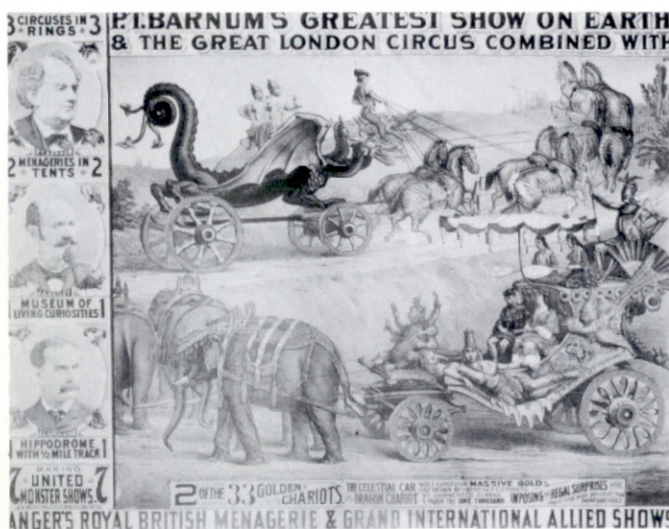


Photo No. 7

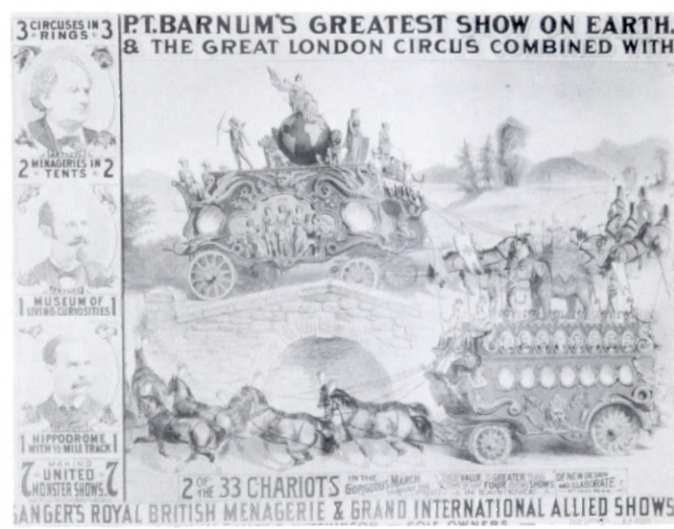


Photo No. 8



# RINGLING BROS and BARNUM & BAILEY COMBINED CIRCUS



The Magyars, a Hungarian troupe that appeared with Ringling Barnum in the 1930's. Author's Collection.

acrobatics—for the execution of the routines requires the same knowledge, reflexes, coordination, agility and daunt—though often different “timing.” For the top-mounter, the teeterboard’s propulsion may account for less physical exertion—but greater and more dangerous leaps; for the middleman, more difficult catches; for the underman, more alertness and greater shocks to absorb.

It would be almost an impossibility to list all of the great teeterboard performers which have presented this form of acrobatics in our various circus rings and music-halls since the turn of the century. But among the earliest and best should be mentioned The Yacopis, first seen with Barnum & Bailey as early as 1902; The Picchianis, the first to execute a back somersault to a 4-high in 1904; and The 5 Mezetti Bros., the first to turn a quadruple to a seat on the underman’s shoulders!

No doubt, the “expert” will promptly point out that there have been many acts since then which have far surpassed that of the Mezetti Bros. That is true. But what some circophiles may tend to forget or take into account is the fact that Sylvester, the Mezetti top-mounter, stood at 5 foot 9 inches and weighed 165 pounds, while his catcher, Butch, stood only 5 foot 10 inches and weighed less than 180 pounds! If one is to compare these figures with those of the 60 to 80 pound top-mounters and 200 and 220 pound catchers, the Mezettis’ achievements are indeed remarkable!

At the time that the Mezettis presented the quadruple at the New York Hippodrome, this feat was considered so incredible that it was considerable time before another teeterboard act made an attempt to duplicate it.

When Orlando Yacopi, considered one of the greatest exponents of teeterboard artistry, heard about the quadruple of the Mezettis, he promptly snorted: “Ridiculous! Impossible!” However, subsequently, the Argentinian must have pondered at great length over this “impossibility”—because it was not too long after hearing of the Mezetti feat that one of The Yacopi’s top-mounters was also executing the quadruple!

It’s difficult to understand how our “purists” can continue to bewail and moan over the decadence of “ground-and-shoulder” acrobatics after witnessing the splendid performances of such outstanding teeterboard numbers as those of the Fadulys, Asgards, Magyars, Raskos, Breiers, Waldemars and others too numerous to mention. Some of those once famous troupes no longer appear in our circus rings. But when it comes to pure acrobatics, those former superb artists certainly can be considered the equals of any of the former “carpet” troupes like the Millettes, Montrose, Bourbonnel, Cragg, Heras and such.

Sometimes fond memories of the past have a tendency to dim the realities of the present. Besides, how can one make comparisons? By what yardstick? Who is to tell whether the top-mounter of the Yacopis could or could not have turned a forward double from and to Al Millette’s shoulders?—or whether Ernie Millette could or could not have executed a back to the 5-high pyramid of the Yacopis? Such speculations are as foolish as they are futile. Nobody can question the greatness of the once famous Millette Troupe—or that of any of their contemporaries. But for anyone to consider such masters of the teeterboard as the Yacopis, Picchianis or Magyars inferior to those of previous generations, is absurd.

Whether or not the “purists” continue to gnash their teeth over the disappearance of the “ground-to-shoulder” numbers of a past era, the fact remains that the introduction of the teeterboard has given the circus audience numberless varieties which could never have come to pass without it.

Today we have numerous troupes executing sensational routines from as many as two and even three boards snapping either alternately and/or simultaneously—and sending voltigers into the air to turn double-twisters, triples and even quadruples! Inevitably, some imaginative performers were bound to inaugurate additional novelties. Thus—and not especially in chronological order—came the Morways, and Binders, using the teeterboard to execute spectacular hand-to-hand and head-to-hand balancing routines; others, like The Larentys and The Alcatrazes, combining the board with the trampoline; The Solohkins, leaping to and from it to their double-wire; The Faggiolis, with voltigers leaping from it to a catcher on a fly-trap; The Dagys and The Monahans, catching the top-mounters from a risley-trinka; The Bertinis, who combine it with cycles; and the Mikhail Devoeikos, who turn 18 foot somersaults from the board on 6 foot stilts!

Who would contend that such a display of variety is not more attractive to the audience than the same old stereotype “ground-and-shoulder” numbers of olden times?

It would be difficult—well nigh impossible—to list all of the great teeterboard performers which have appeared in our circus rings during the past half-century. But from among the so many should be listed those who have been considered “masters” of the craft! Parenthetically, there is an odd parallel to risley which has taken place with the teeterboard. In the previous installment, it was commented upon that once the Germans seemed to have a monopoly on risley and now the Egyptians outnumber all other nationalities. Fifty years ago, no particular nationality could claim any supremacy in the field of the teeterboard. But today, among the best, there are more Hungarians than all other nationalities combined!

From among the Hungarians can be cited: The Magyars, who as far back as four decades ago, used to execute the triple to the shoulders and a back to a 4-high. Today, some of the ex-members of the Magyars are either with The Great Alexanders or with The 7 Putzais, who, working with 2 teeterboards, also turn a back to a 4-high; a double from one board to the other, from which another top-mounter executes a double-twister to the shoulders; also the quadruple to a chair on the underman’s shoulders!

There are also The Fadulys, whose 160 pound top-mounter executes a back to a 4-high and the triple to the shoulders. The 7 Hortobagyls, in a class with the Putzais, with rapid spectacular routines from 3 boards, including the familiar triple and back to 4-high.

The 7 Brandts, as great as any, also with a fully grown top-mounter of 160 pounds, executing the quadruple. Likewise, the Varadis Troupe. Worthy of special mention are The 7 Stanecks, with Leana Staneck turning a back to a 4-high, the only girl to accomplish this feat since Ortans Cristiani. But the Stanecks have even a more difficult routine than that, wherein Leana turns a back to a 3-high, not feet to shoulders, but *with the middleman’s feet on the underman’s head—and with Leana landing with her feet on the middleman’s head!*

Regarding the above unique routine, there is an interesting sidelight that should be mentioned here. It took place at the Puyallup Fair in Washington in September of 1963. This was the first time that Leana Staneck was going to do the back to a 4-high publicly, with her husband, Andre, being the middleman. Fearing the possibility that his wife might miss in her first public attempt, Andre asked Fay Alexander to stand by at the bottom of the column—just in case.

Everything was set and ready. Leana, who doesn’t weigh more than 105 pounds soaking wet, was so eager to get sufficient height for the trick that she gave it that extra lift as the board sent her soaring upward. But that extra “go” she gave it was too much. She was literally sailing high above the column—and toward



disaster. As an efficient middleman, Andre reached as high as he could in an instinctive attempt to get a hold of her ankles. But this resulted in his losing his balance — and crashing to the ground, while poor Leana was by then also coming down toward terra-firma. It could have spelled sudden death for Leana — had not Fay Alexander been there to catch her expertly in his arms. She was a bit shaken but unhurt. Not so with Andre, who suffered a bad sprain in one knee, a broken wrist and fractured cheekbone.

Paraphrasing, it should be mentioned that, heedless of the pain Andre was suffering from such injuries, he continued to perform for 5 more performances before finally going to have his wrist put into a cast. A tribute to the stoic courage of a circus artist! Last seen performing, The Stanecks are still giving the same outstanding teeterboard performance as they always have — with Leana executing that back to a 4-high as beautifully and flawlessly as ever!

Returning from that short digression, among the Hungarians also to be cited, are: The 7 Bellos, who, working with 2 boards, currently execute a double from one board to the other — from which another top-mounter turns the quadruple to a seat on the catcher's shoulders. The 7 Bokaros and their various routines are familiar to the millions of circophiles who have witnessed their performances for more than a decade with the Ringling Show.

The 7 Asgards also have been turning off a teeterboard for more than 4 decades. To be included in the Hungarian contingent are also The 6 Szabos, the top-mounter of which, Julius, promises to equal and/or surpass any of the best. Previously mentioned are The Morways and The Binders, using the board to execute astounding hand-to-hand and hand-to-head balancing routines. Among them are also The 5 Dagvars, with their unorthodox leaps from the board to the fly-traps.

If one were to judge by sheer weight of numbers, it's obvious that the Hungarians hold a distinct superiority over other nationalities. But when it comes to quality, there are many acts from other nationalities that stand on par with the best of the Hungarians.

From among the Italians can be cited The 9 Larribles — as excellent artists as once were their famous compatriots, The Picchianis. They, too, have feminine members who are capable of doing routines usually in the male domain. Besides the customary routines from the board, two of the girls, Elsa and Adelina, are sensational ground tumblers. In the act is also Salvatore Saly, who executes a ground-double; and Johannes, who turns the back to a 4-high — *to the head!* The latter also executes a "lay-out double" with the ease and grace of a leaper from the fly-bar!

Previously mentioned are also The 4 Amazing Monahans and The 7 Faggiolis with their tricky routines from the board to the risley trinkas. Equally outstanding are The Wallardys and The 5 Amandis of Denmark.

The Germans can proudly point to The Fredonias, who besides their outstanding risley number also present a teeterboard act, and the Richenbach Family, which is usually billed as The Americanos and/or The Indianas.

Among other sundry nationalities are The Lucas, who execute a double to 4-high; The 5 Otharis, 7 Maravilhas, 5 Viganos, Dewaynes, Braytons and a host of others too numerous to list.

Regarding the last two of the above listed (Dewaynes and Braytons), perhaps it should be mentioned that such present day famous flying-return artists as Fay Alexander, Bob Yerkes, Reggie Armor, Don Johnson and Billy Snyder served their acrobatic apprenticeships with the Ted Dwayne Troupe as risley and teeterboard performers.

Inasmuch as all of those renowned artists graduated under the tutelage of Ted Dwayne, it must be quite gratifying for that old teacher of risley and teeterboard to know he had a hand in shaping the professional destiny of such outstanding pupils!

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The Breier Troupe, Hungarian group on Hagenbeck Wallace in 1929, featured a triple from teeterboard to shoulders (no chair). Burt Wilson Collection.

the back to a 4-high publicly, with her husband, Andre, being the middleman. Fearing the possibility that his wife might miss in her first public attempt, Andre asked Fay Alexander to stand by at the bottom of the column — just in case.

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The Cristiani Family shown while on the Al G. Barnes Circus in 1937. Burt Wilson Collection.

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Inasmuch as all of those renowned artists graduated under the tutelage of Ted Dewayne, it must be quite gratifying for that old teacher of risley and teeterboard to know he had a hand in shaping the professional destiny of such outstanding pupils!

Another interesting sidelight is the fact that, for a while, those same greats of flying-return fame had their own teeterboard member under the name of The FayGray Troupe, which included two of the wives, Dorothy Yerkes and Rose Alexander.

Today, Fay Alexander, Reggie Armor and Billy Snyder confine themselves to the fly-bar. But Bob Yerkes still presents his teeterboard number, under the name of The Braytons, featuring Don Martinez' sensational ground-tumbling which includes the round-off, flip-flap and *double* somersault on the ground!

Contemporary chroniclers have lavished considerable laudatory comments regarding the Russian performers — especially about The Beliakovs and The Devoeikos troupes. There is no question that both of these troupes leave an audience breathless at every performance. But when it comes to true teeterboard "artistry," neither of them could begin to compare — or even come near — such past masters as The Yacopis or present day artists as The Putzais.

To be sure, when the one member of the Devoeikos, on 6 foot stilts, launches into the air from the teeterboard to execute a back somersault which covers a trajectory of almost 24 feet before land-

ing in the ring on those stilts — and when another top-mounter also sails from the board to execute another back somersault to the shoulders of the catcher standing on the stilts, such feats never fail to trigger admiration and applause. Indeed this is well deserved. But, excluding those two sensational tricks and speaking strictly in terms of "acrobatics," experts could never class the Devoeikos as "masters" of the teeterboard.

The same comment holds true for The Beliakovs — who use a different device which is not truly a teeterboard. A "swing" would be the better term, for it consists of a platform swinging from the ends of a rigid rigging. As this platform is swung into motion from the edge of the ring, the top mounters are thus imparted with a different type of momentum than that of the teeterboard. Rather than the sudden "spring" of the teeterboard, comes a slower and effortless "sail" of the performer through the air. Here again the routines are spectacular — but only because these entail parabolas of anywhere between 18 to 24 feet in the air before landing. Obviously, each such "landing" is quite a shock to the ankles and knees. Just how long any performer can continue to absorb such painful jars and remain a performer is a moot question.

Actually, members of both of these Russian troupes are better artists in "ground tumbling" than they are on the teeterboard. Among the members of The Devoeikos are two exceptional performers who can do anything — including *rondade*, flip-flap and *double!* They do this not once at every performance — *but twice!* One of them, from the board, does spectacular "*lay-out*" *double!* And another executes a *double-arab!* As ground tumblers, they are great artists! But when it comes to real teeterboard "artistry," their routines are much more "flashy" than difficult.

Among the Russians are also The 5 Farkos who, using the same type of swinging "*balancoire*" as the Beliakovs, perform similar routines as their compatriots. The Solohkins (previously mentioned), who combine the teeterboard with their wire act, deserve singular notice for a difficult routine, which consists of the top-mounter executing a back-double from the board — to land feet-to-shoulders into a 3-high column *balancing on a wire!*

It should be stated that, for this particular routine, the top-mounter uses the "mechanic." But this is *not* his choice. With the Russians, the "mechanic" is a mandatory law which applies whenever nationals are executing dangerous routines — even outside the confines of the Iron Curtain. As far as the Solohkins are concerned, they perform this routine with so much assurance that it is a certainty that they could just as well execute it without the "mechanic." Unfortunately,



violation of this edict would result in not only a stiff penalty—but also placing their career in jeopardy. Hence, strict obedience to the Soviet law.

To be sure, as far as audiences are concerned, the Devoeikos, Farkos, Beliakovs and Solohkins do present sensational performances. But for sheer "teeterboard artistry" there are some of their compatriots (not yet seen on this side of the "Iron Curtain") who surpass them by far. According to Wayne Larey, Alfred Fredonia, The Palacios and a number of the performers who were with the Ringling Show when it went to Russia during its European jaunt, there exists one teeterboard number which performs incredible routines never dreamed possible!

Graduates from The Moscow State School of Acrobatics is a troupe of 8 males and 1 girl presenting a teeterboard number in which one of their top-mounters executes a triple, *not* to a chair, but *feet to shoulders!* More fantastic, they do it to a 3-high!

Again it should be mentioned that the above routine was performed with the "mechanic." But, as previously explained, that is a law which no Russian performer can afford to ignore.

These same Russian artists are also reported to be doing a two-and-a-half forward to a 3-high, landing onto a hand-to-hand stand; also a back one-and-a-half with a pirouette-and-a-half, landing onto a hand-to-hand stand!

It would be difficult to challenge the integrity and/or trustworthiness of the professionals who reported these feats. It must be taken for granted that, as professionals, they are qualified to speak with authority and could not have been mistaken in their appraisals—nor would there be any reason for them to aggrandize such feats. If true, then the accomplishments of this troupe are indeed stupendous! It is regrettable that neither Wayne Larey, Alfred Fredonia or The Palacios didn't take the time to jot down the unpronounceable names of those astounding performers. We can but hope that the circophiles outside the confines of the Iron Curtain will soon have the opportunity to witness their remarkable feats!

And if in the near or distant future other artists should be able to duplicate these feats from the teeterboard, it leaves one to wonder what the "purists" will have to say—and whether or not they will stop moaning over the decadence of "pure acrobatics."

Be that as it may and to return to the main theme of this series, which is concerning the triple as executed in the various phases of acrobatics, it can be safely said that, with the artificial momentum imparted by the board, the triple has become so commonplace as to be unworthy of mention. Today, only the quadruple is considered an achievement.

As with risley, where not too many succeeded in executing the triple, teeterboard artists who have mastered the quadruple from the teeterboard can be counted on the fingers of two hands. First were The Mezetti Bros., followed by The Yacopis. After that, it was achieved by the Asgards, Putzais, Bellos and Brandts. It has been reported that the Fadulys executed it for a short while during 1947 and, likewise, that the Great Alexanders (former members of the Magyar Troupe) also did it during 1952. But it has been impossible to ascertain whether these last two reports are fiction or facts.

Obviously, it is only a question of time before the names of other performers will be added to the list. It goes without saying that if the nameless Russian performers mentioned can turn a triple to the shoulders to form a 3-high, they, too, have the capabilities of turning a quadruple. Whether or not they ever do isn't too important—for their achievement in executing the triple to a 3-high far surpasses the quadruple landing in the seat!

Whether or not any teeterboard artist can ever achieve the "ultimate" of a quadruple to the shoulders and/or a quintuple to the seat is a moot question which only a crystal ball gazer could answer. While neither is impossible, there are limits to the capabilities of an earthly human body. But whether or not it ever comes to pass, one thing is sure: When it comes to the teeterboard, evolution has been the synonym for progress.

Without a question of a doubt, and the "purists" contentions notwithstanding, the teeterboard has not only given height and breadth to circus acrobatics, but an astounding "variety" which could never have been accomplished without it. For that, every circophile should be grateful.

It is regrettable that, as with risley, individual credits cannot be given to the many remarkable top-mounters and understanders who contributed their talents to this art. As customary with most of the large acrobatic numbers, members of such troupes often lose their personal identity. What a pity it is that each individual name cannot be indelibly inscribed in the honor roll of our circus annals!

To be sure, such never-to-be-forgotten numbers as those of the Millette, Bourbonel, Montrose, Heras, Mansurys, Craggs and many other troupes, will always be cherished in our memory. But let us also give proper recognition and be grateful for such outstanding artists as the Glinserettis, Picchianis, Yacopis, Mezettis, Asgards, Lelands, Fadulys, Castrillons, Dollars, Putzais, Brandts and all the countless others who dedicated themselves to accomplish their utmost from a teeterboard!

(TO BE CONTINUED. In the next issue: The Triple from the Trampoline).



The Yacopi Troupe doing their five high from the board on Ringling Barnum in 1941. Pfening Collection.

#### CHS MENTIONED IN COMPTONS

A fine article on the circus of today and yesterday appears in the 1965 edition of the Compton Encyclopedia Yearbook, just published. The article was written by CHS Leonard Farley and carries many wonderful photos in full color and black and white.

The "Great Britain," "Cinderella" and "America" wagons are pictured in full color in the Milwaukee Schlitz July 4th parade.

In a section entitled "friends of the circus" the Circus Historical Society is listed, along with another similar organization.

#### DON HOWLAND DIES

Donald S. Howland, of Columbus, Ohio, died on March 12, 1965, of a heart attack. Don became a member of the CHS in 1941 and carried the membership number 25.

Don was born and raised near Baraboo, Wisconsin, where he went to school with Dr. H. H. Conley, who has remained a close friend over the years. He traveled on the Ringling Barnum show in the early 1920's for one season.

For many years his home was in South Bend, Indiana, and during this period in the 1930's he was a frequent visitor to Peru and Rochester winter quarters.

A very active fan all his life, Don built over the years a very fine collection of circusiana, which he gave about ten years ago to the Wisconsin State Historical Society, in Madison.



# Wallace & Clark Circus

1951-1953

by

Donald R. Carson  
Douglas Lyon

The name of Wallace & Clark has been kicking around the circus world since 1951, with the latest venture being that of Pat Graham in 1960 and 1962, but the actual owner of the title has been Norman (Luke) Anderson, who first opened with the Wallace and Clark title in 1951.

To fully understand the story behind the Wallace & Clark title and its history, you have to look back into the past life of not only Norman Anderson, but also that of his father Bud E. Anderson.

Bud E. Anderson started his career with Indian Bud's Wild West Show, followed shortly by Oklahoma Bud's Wild West Show. 1924 saw the birth of his Anderson Bros. Circus, which was a wagon show. In 1927 Anderson Bros. was weighing to use motorized equipment. 1931 saw the name changed to Seal Bros. Circus, with 100% complete motorized equipment. The show did quite well until 1937 when Bud sold to Ira Watts and Charlie Parker. In mid-1938 Bud bought Charley Lamont's Norris Bros. Circus, after touring for six weeks he closed to rebuild it. In 1939 he had out Bud Anderson's Jungle Oddities Circus which was composed of animals and equipment from Tom Mix, Tim McCoy, Cole Bros. and other shows, this continued through 1941.

With Si Rubens as his partner, Bud brought out his old Bud E. Anderson Circus in 1944. In late 1945, much of the quipment was sold to Floyd King and H. J. Rumbaugh. The next several years saw Bud raising race horses. About this time Bud's son Norman came into

light, handling the concessions on Jimmy Woods 101 Ranch Wild West Show in 1946. 1947 Norman opened with Jimmy's Yankee Patterson Circus, but finished the season with DeWayne Bros. Circus. Then 1948 found him on James M. Cole Circus.

Meanwhile, Bud had framed a new edition of Seal Bros. Circus, and opened in mid-season of 1948. The following season, Norman joined his dad on Seal Bros. handling the banners, concessions, and serving as Assistant Manager. This operation followed suit until mid-1950 when Bud E. Anderson was killed in Montana.

Billboard first reported on January 20th of 1951 that there might be a possibility that Mrs. Laura Anderson (Bud's widow) and her son Norman might put Seal Bros. Circus back on the road in 1951. The equipment had been stored on the west coast since July, 1950, and their earlier negotiations to sale the equipment had failed.

In early February an ad appeared asking for teams and family acts, contracting Agent, Organ Player and useful people. Seal Bros. Circus; General Delivery: Venice, California.

February 17th reported that Norman Anderson had bought a new canvas loader in Hugo, Oklahoma, and a new side show tent from O. Henry Tent & Awning Co. They also bought three new Chevrolet trucks and added animals to the side show. The article also stated the John D. Foss would be the agent; Steve Kuzmick, boss billposter; Jack Turner, legal adjuster; Hall & Leonard, side show; Laura Anderson, office. With

This big stand of paper was posted by Bill and Jackie Wilcox, who are shown in the photo. The city was Burlington, Washington, June 30, 1951. Bill Woodcock Collection.

winterquarters opening February 15th, and opening date set at April 1.

A week later, Norman announced that the title of Seal Bros. Circus would be changed to Wallace & Clark Wild Animal Circus. The title was first to be Wallace & Kellogg for the towns in Idaho; but late changed by Mrs. Anderson to Wallace & Clark to sound better phoenetically. He also added that he had purchased a full grown Hippopotamus from Henry Treich of New York, and that his crew was building a hippo den at the quarters for it's arrival about March 1. (This hippo was Victor from the old John Robinson Circus billed as "Goliath").

The shows winterquarters were located at 4118 Del Rey Avenue in Venice, California. Shreveport Ethridge, the boss ticket seller, was in charge of the carpenter work, with Clarence Fisher as his assistant, and they were building a light plant. In the meantime, Dale Petross was breaking in a high schol horse act. It was also noted that Todd Henry was the chief electrician and that he would operate John Foss' Wild Life Show.

It was planned for the show to move on sixteen trucks with two on advance with six people. A special line of paper was ordered from Walters Show Print Co. All of the show personnel were requested to report to Elsinore, California on March 30th.

The show opened on April 1st at Elsinore, California, with fourteen trucks back painted red and white. The rolling equipment is listed below: (-s- denoted semi, SB Straight Bed, and W for Wagon).

S'w #	Type	Contents	Make	Color
1) 9	W	Cage Wagon		Red
2) 17	Bus	Sleeper	Int'l	Red
3) 22	SB	Canvas Spool	Chevy	White
4) 31	-s-	Hippo Den (28 ft. long)	Ford	White
5) 44	-s-	Elephants	Int'l	Red
6)	W	Props, Poles, Etc.		White
7)	-s-	Office & Tickets	Chevy	White
8)	-s-	Cookhouse	Chevy	Red
9)	SB	Horses	Reo	Red
10)	-s-	Poles and Planks	Chevy	Red
11)	SB	Water		Red
12)	SB	Light Plank	Mack	Red







The canvas spool wagon No. 22 was on King Bros. western unit in 1956 while Anderson was on the King show with his midway diner. Photo by Chet Slusser.

Two of the units were from Bud Anderson old shows, the Cookhouse semi and the light plant. The canvas loader was the Sanguin-Miller type.

Canvas on the show consisted of the Big Top which was a 90 foot top with two 30's and one 40, which had only been used for 12 weeks previously. The side show tent which was new from O. Henry Tent and Awning of Chicago, and was a 60 foot with three 30's. There also a small dining tent on the show, beside the marquee.

For acts, Norman signed the Escalante Troupe for aerial bars, trampoline, and wire. Todd Henry for tight wire and chair balancing. Dale Petross and Loran Edwards for a six horse liberty act and four high school horses. Walter Jennier and his seal Buddy, with his wife Ethel (Miss Aerialetta) on trapeze. Peggy Henry presented the bulls. Bernie Griggs was producing clown, with Leta Griggs on the Hammond organ, and Little Bernice Griggs loop-the-loop.

Personel on the show consisted of Norman E. Anderson, Owner and manager; Mrs. Laura Anderson, Secretary-Treasurer; Mrs. Francis Anderson, Concessions; Mrs. Whitey Owens, Office Wagon; John Scott, Concessions; John D. Foss, General Agent; Bill Wilcox, Brigade Agent (Adv. Manager); Frank Austin, advance (Joined in Sept.); Jackie Wilcox, Press (Special Agent); Jack Turner, Legal Adjuster; Harry Fitch joined as legal adjuster in mid-May; Shreveport Ethridge, Tickets; H. C. Sperry, Big Show tickets; and Rhea Ethridge, mail.

Sweaters McFarland, Boss Canvasman; Todd Henry, Electrician; Ed O'Connell, Props; Ward Hall, Equestrian Director and Announcer; Curley Schaffer, Steward (Left in June); Scotty Gallup, Cookhouse top (left in June); Dorothy Worchester, Purchasing Agent; W. J. Brumley, Transportation; Howard (Yellow)

Riggs, Elephant Superintendent; Ed Levitt, Hippo and other caged animals; Clarence Fisher, Ring Stock.

The Side Show was managed by Ward Hall and Harry Leonard and contained the following acts: The Great Wardell, vent; Harry Leonard, punch and pudy; Gloria Gayl, Hawaiian annex review; Mysto (Jean Prince) magic; Two Leonardos, knife throwing; Iris Christy, electric act; Mysto Miles, fire; and Professor Edward, animal lecture.

Andy Kelly and Whitey Owens, had concession. John D. Foss' Wild Life Exhibit was managed by Todd and Peggy Henry, with Marshall Van Scoyk in charge. Wes Speich had the midway diner, and Charles H. Johnston the novelties.

Also on the show was Claude Poe, Joe B. Webb, Dorothy Worster, Loren Edwards, Charles H. Johnston, Jimmy Hamiter, Mr. and Mrs. Buck Rogers, and Dee Aldrich and Eva Latour, promotions.

Wallace & Clark's 1951 Program ran one hour and forty minutes and consisted of the following numbers:

- 1) Escalante Bros.—Bar
- 2) Ward Hall—Juggling
- 3) Todd Henry—Wire
- 4) Dale Petross—Ponies
- 5) Miss Aerialetta (Jennier)—trapeze
- 6) Jean Prince, Betty Escalante, and Ann Griggs—Ladders
- 7) Jo Ann Jennier—Contortion
- 8) Henry Due—Tables
- 9) Leta Bernice—Loop-the-loop
- 10) Hermaline Griggs and Dale Petross—Menage
- 11) Bounders—Trampoline
- 12) Walter Jennier and "Buddy" the seal
- 13) Peggy Henry—Elephants
- 14) Dale Petross—Liberty Horses

Clowns on the show in 1951 were Bernie Griggs and Jack Prince.

The show closed their 1951 season at Warren, Arkansas on October 20th and made their winterquarters at the Fairgrounds in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Superintendents at the Winterquarters were



The elephants are shown here in front of the bull semi. Photo by Art Speltz.

Lee Bradley who was in charge; Mrs. Lee Bradley, cookhouse; Dale Petross, horses; and Wally Ross, elephants.

In December, the show's elephant Wilhelmina, who was 75 years old and valued at \$5,000 died in winterquarters. Her death was attributed to a stroke which was brought about by her old age. She had once been with Ringling. Her body was sent to a Little Rock rendering company.

Norman Anderson purchased a new big top, an 80 foot with three 40's, in Kansas City. He also added a new Marquee and menagerie tops. He planned to use the 1951 Side Show top again for 1952.

He also purchased a new elephant, and two trucks and a trailer from Stevens Bros. Circus. In early January 1952, Norman purchased two camels from Louis Goebel for his menagerie. With this purchased, Norman now owned two elephants, Palm and Big Babe.

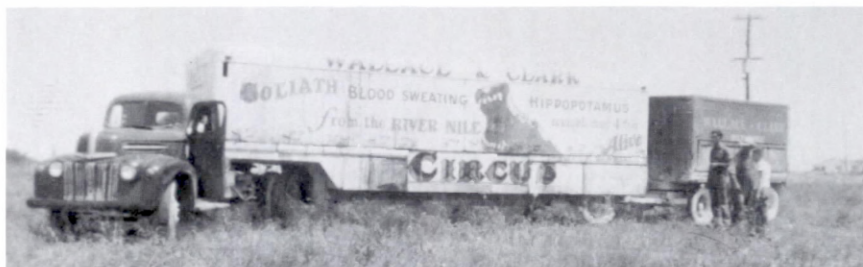
At the first of February, Norman purchased an airplane which was to be used for advance promotion work. He also stated the Bill and Jackie Wilcox would again be head of the Advertising Department and Special Agent. Their opening date was to be April 18th under the auspices of the Elks Club at Hot Springs, Arkansas.

Frank Ellis joined on from Cole and Walters where he had the concessions. His duties on Wallace and Clark was to be the Legal Adjuster and Promotion Manager.

The advance was to use an additional panel truck in 1952, and also a new line of paper. A new water wagon had been constructed and it would double as a fire truck. The show also had to add a new truck to carry the two camels and the llama that had been obtained.

Advance for the show was listed as W. F. (Bill) Wilcox, Brigade Manager; Jackie Wilcox, special agent, in charge of press, radio and schools; Lyle Reynolds, Boss Billposter; Claude Poe, Boss





Lithographer. With a crew of Stanley Beal, Elmer Velter and Clyde Jackson, Jr.

The Marquee on the show was a five pole top, which was 60 foot long. The 40 x 34 foot space behind the entrance curtain was used as a menagerie with the two elephants, two camels, and alpaca.

Cage animals in the side show were the Hippopotamus which was in a long semi-trailer cage, also with a bear, and a lion. There was also a four wheel trailer with a group of assorted monkeys.

On the midway was a Gorilla Show operated by Frank Ellis, a pony ride, and Francis Anderson's concessions.

The season opened on Friday, April 18 for a two day stand at Hot Springs, Arkansas. Sunday they were off, and then they played Wynne, Arkansas on Monday, followed by shows in Tennessee, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

C. C. Smith joined in West Virginia to take over the Office Wagon. Bobby Wooten joined the Elephant staff.

The Program for the 1952 season consisted of the following:

- 1) Grand Entry
- 2) Dale Petross—Pony Drill  
Don Morris—Pony Drill
- 3) Todd Henry—Wire Act
- 4) Mike Mackey—Funny Ford
- 5) Ladders
- 6) Loran Edwards—Liberty Horses
- 7) Clowns
- 8) Miss Aerioletta—Trapeze
- 9) The Ranch Hand Trio
- 10) Dale Petross—High School Horse  
Loran Edwards—High School Horse
- 11) The Three Gobs—Acrobatic Tumbling Act.
- 12) Todd Henry—Chair & Table Balancing Act
- 13) Joan Jennier—Contortion Act
- 14) Jennier's trained seal Buddy
- 15) Webs
- 16) Mike Mackey and his Chimps

Anderson's hippo semi-shown here with the No. 9 cage, was also on the King show in 1956. Photo by Art Speltz.

- 17) The Morris Troupe—Teeterboard
- 18) Clowns
- 19) Elephants—worked by Ross, Riggs, and Henry

At various times Acts 11, 12, and 13 were worked together.

This program was augmented in early June with the Brownie Silverlake Troupe with Dogs and Roman Rings. Myrna Silverlake, Web, ladder, and Contortion. Brownie and his son Jimmy were clowns.

Mid-season Norman bought a new tractor to pull one of the elephant trailers. About the same time Sweaters McFarland joined as Shorty Lynn's assistant.

During the last several weeks of the season, the Newman family joined with their posing horses and bareback riding.

The show closed September 14th at Yates Center, Kansas, and went into winterquarters at Cherryvale, Kansas. In November, the elephant Palm died, this was probably the oldest elephant with any circus.

In December, Norman advertised for sale a 90 foot top with two 30's and a 40. A Marquee which was 20 x 30, and a Side Show top, 50 with two 30's.

Wallace & Clark's 1953 season opened April 11th at Fredonia, Kansas. With the program being presented as follows:

- 1) Murillo Troups—Comedy Duo
- 2) Swinging Ladders (4)
- 3) Clowns—Baseball
- 4) Wally Ross—Liberty Horses
- 5) Contortion Display
- 6) Miss Aerioletta—Trapeze
- 7) Jargo Clown number
- 8) Wayne Newman Troupe—Bareback Riding

This is the lot layout in White Salmon, Washington, in 1953. Photo by Chet Slusser.



- 9) Spanish Web (4)
- 10) Clown Walkaround
- 11) Walter Jennier—Seal
- 12) Eve La Tour—Concert Announcement
- 13) Brownie Silverlake—Dogs
- 14) Murillo Troupe—Trampoline
- 15) Billy Powell—Tight Wire
- 16) Clown Wedding
- 17) Gee Gee Powell—Elephants
- 18) Newman Troupe—Posing Horses

The Concert consisted of Eva La Tour, Howard Riggs, Joan Jennier, Maria Murillo, Phyllis Newman, and Myrna Silverlake.

During their Canadian tour the show added to its bull department when Joseph Bourier joined with three elephants from Cole Bros. Circus making a total of four.

Enroute to Flin Flon, Manitoba, the show came across a truck which blocked the highway. They unloaded the three elephants that were with them, and towed a bus and several cars around the truck. When the fourth elephant arrived, the truck was moved, and the show proceeded on to Flin Flon.

The incident resulted in an editorial in the Swan River newspaper, which lauded the show and criticized a Manitoba officials for poor roads and for charging the show \$3,000 for permission to work in the province.

Business was good, but the show had strong opposition from films of the recent Coronation of the Queen of England. Later stands were hampered by a polio scare in Canada, and the government wouldn't allow children under 16 to gather in a public place.

Personel for the 1953 season was as follows: Norman Anderson, Owner; Francis Anderson, owner; Laura Anderson, Secretary and Treasurer; Jack Turner, General Agent; Frank Ellis, legal Adjuster; Jackie Wilcox, Press; John Lynn, Superintendent.

The Outdoor Advertising was headed up by Sam Price who was the manager; with Dorothea Turner, schools; Bill Wilcox, biller; Victor Baldwin, biller.

Department heads were: Floyd Bradbury, Equestrian Director; Francis Anderson, Candy Stands; Joe "Doc" Edwards, 24 Hour Man—Banners; Basil Duncan, ticket wagon; A. F. MacFarland, Boss Canvasman; Archie Johnson, Assistant Boss Canvasman; Laura Anderson, Front Door; Floyd Bradbury, Side Show Manager; Marie Loter, Organist; Kenneth Ikert, Candy Stands Manager; E. J. Rumbell, Dining Car Manager; Cy Murray, Steward; William Mitchel, Transportation; Pet Reeh, Props.

The Midway Attractions were: Gorilla Show, Frank Ellis; Pony Ride, John Grady; Ticket Seller, Gladys Ellis; Rat Exhibit, Billie and Gee Powell.

Big Show Performers were: Billy Powell, Gee Gee Powell, Walter Jennier, Ethel Jennier, Joan Jennier, Pearl Ferris,





An opening being made in front of the side show. Photo by Art Speltz.

Vivian Reeh, Wayne G. Newman, Marge Newman, Phyllis Newman, Edwardo Murillo, Carlos Duarte, Eddie Murillo, Jr., Brownie Silverlake, Myrna Silverlake, Josephine Silverlake, Mr. and Mrs. Stears, Gil and Lil Wilson.

Clowns were Archie Silverlake, Jack Oaks, Jimmie O'Donnel, Tommy Whitesides, Melvin Silverlake, Edwin Cooper.

Animal Department, Ed Leveck. Elephant Department — Wally Ross, Superintendent; Howard Riggs, Assistant; Joseph Bouvier, Albert Smith. Ring Stock — Wally Ross Superintendent; San Ross, Grooms; Red Smith, Groom; Cliff Bussey, Groom.

Side Show — Pearl Ferris, Dancer; Mr. and Mrs. Stears, Entertainers; Bob Cusson, Boss Canvasman; Jim Hunter; Henry Luboucan; Eddie Maberly; Roy Arnold; Wally Ross, ticket seller; Bob Cusson, ticket seller.

Cook House consisted of Cy Murray, Dorethea Carr, and James Mathes.

The Big Top crew included Jessie Vaughn, Robert Shaw, George Richardson, Jasper Bitterich, Jerry Knight, James Benson, Roy La Roeque, Arch Johnstone.

Ticket Takers were Evelyn Mitchie, Marge Newman, and Mariea Murillo.

Mechanical Department — William Mitchel, Harvey Boucher, Jack Cunningham. Light Department — Bobbie Jean Lowe, Phillip Kelley, and Russel Gore. Prop Department — Pat Reeh, Superintendent; Clarence Fisher, Allen Kendrick, Pete Peterson Rusty Cardinal, and Bob Gallegos.

On Concessions were Kenneth R. Ikert, Billie Griffin, Charley Smith, Dean Lester, John Lux, Al Wardetz, John Inghram, Clement Frechette, Robert

The cookhouse semi no. 26 is shown here with the dining tent. Photo by Chet Slusser.



Smith. Diner — E. J. Rumbell, Manager, Bill Perkins and Jim Elmore.

The 1953 season turned out to be the most profitable one that they had yet seen. The show closed Tuesday, October 13th at Ojai, and set winterquarters in Norwalk, California. The three Elephants that they had leased from Cole Bros. Circus were shipped to Oklahoma where they were added to Clyde Bros. Indoor Circus for the winter season, William (Whitey) Kneiss was in charge.

The winterquarters staff consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Norman Anderson, Mrs. Laura Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Ellis, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Turner, Andrew McFarland, Wally Ross, John Grady, Ed Loveck, Heavy Benson, and Clarence Fisher.

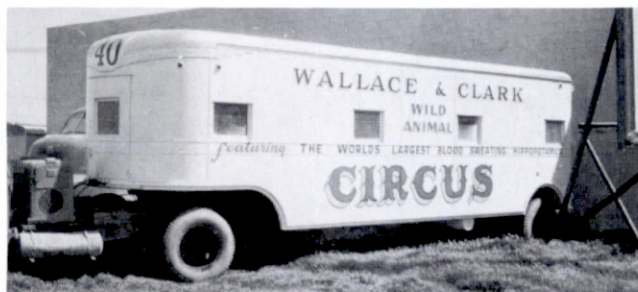
In February, 1954, it was first reported that the show might not tour in 1954. The article stated that the Elephant and Hippo had been leased to Siebrand Bros. Circus and Carnival, and that Jack Turner would be the agent for American Midway Shows.

Shortly there after an ad appeared stating that the following was for sale: 15 late model Chevrolet trucks. Canvas Spool, Stake Driver, Light Plant, Liberty Act, Pony Drill, Elephant act, two camels, hippo, two leopards, llame, bear, monkeys, hyena and a Big Top, 90 foot with three 40's.

By March it was known the show would not tour. The equipment was to stay in storage on the west coast, while Norman and his mother Laura would be with George W. Cole Circus handling the concessions. Also the Hippo Pit show would be with them. Jack Turner, was the agent for Cole, while Sam Price would be the agent from Tex Carson Circus.

The Wallace & Clark elephant and Liberty horses would be with Siebrand Circus and Carnival.

This was actually the last that was



The hippo semi is shown here as it looked in later years. Photo by George Green.

heard from Norman Anderson's Wallace and Clark Wild Animal Circus. Although his Canvas Spool was later seen on King Bros. Circus, and more recently on Carson & Barnes Circus. Much of the other equipment has disappeared from sight. At one time John A. Strong was using one of Anderson's old trucks.

Then in late 1959 Pat Graham decided to launch a circus, and he acquired the Wallace & Clark title from Norman, along with a cage wagon, a small light plant, a water tank, a Chevrolet Panel truck (which was used on Pat's advance), and some odd poles. Also a lot of paper.

The above mentioned cage wagon eventually ended up at Nature's Haven, and is probably still there.

Pat Graham's Wallace and Clark Circus toured in 1960 and in 1962, but during this past season (1964) it has taken the form of Graham Bros. Circus.

Thus the history of the Wallace and Clark Circus has been chartered, and like so many other shows, it will eventually disappear from the thoughts of many circus minded people, but it will always last in fond memories of the circus historian.

An article is being prepared on the 1929 Buck Jones Wild West Show. Photos of this show are scarce. If you have photos or information on this show please write to the Editor.

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## PHOTO SECTION

Beautifully painted Grandstand Ticket Wagon in 1932 featuring bust paintings of "Carl Hagenbeck, Animal King" and "B. E. Wallace, Circus King." Photo by Charlie Kitto.



### HAGENBECK-WALLACE CIRCUS, 1932

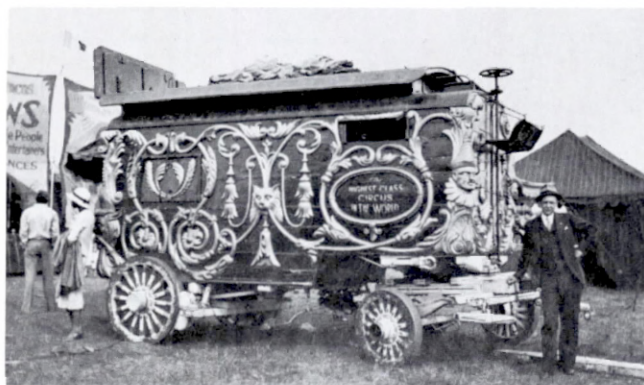
Baggage Wagon No. 85. Wagon was painted red with title and numbering in yellow. Note use of cap and lower case printing in the title which was used by the show several seasons during this period. Photo by Charlie Kitto.



Newly lettered and numbered baggage wagon No. 89. Bill Curtis built or rebuilt the baggage wagons in this series. These photos were taken on August 27, 1932, at Rockford, Ill. Photo by Charlie Kitto.



Circuses often repainted and relettered their wagons during the season. Here baggage wagon No. 44 is in the process of being relettered with the job now half completed. Photo by Charlie Kitto.



Famous Great Wallace Ticket Wagon as it appeared in 1932. Most of the Hagenbeck-Wallace wagons that season carried the show's slogan, "The Highest Class Circus in the World." Photo by Charlie Kitto.



Tripple hammer stake driver used by the show. This piece of labor saving equipment was perfected by Bill Curtis in the 20's and eliminated the sledge gangs on the major tents. Photo by Charlie Kitto.





John Robinson Circus Baggage Wagons, About 1928.

1924

Gladiator and Lion Bandwagon, with No. 2 Band.



Sideshow Band Riding Running Lioness Tableau.

Cage with 4 Horse Hitch.



Two Cages Followed by Jardiner Tableau and 2 More Cages.



All Photos by the Late W. H. Pennoyer Hornell, N.Y.



(Above Photos Taken of Sells-Floto Parade at Hornell, N.Y., July 29, 1924



# CIRCUS RINGS AND CIRCUS HORSES

By JORGEN M. CHRISTIANSEN

I have often been asked what is the standard size of a circus ring. To that my answer is, there is no standard size.

The size of the ring is in accordance to the size of the circus, whether under canvas, in a building, or a ring used on a theatre stage.

The larger circuses that use big animal acts as well as large troupes of performers require more ring space.

In the days of vaudeville routes the bareback riding acts used rings of 28 foot diameter and making it smaller by taking out one section if necessary. The 28 foot diameter ring could also be used for a six horse liberty act, however, it was hard for the horses as well as the bareback riders. For the bareback riders to make the jumps to the horse was difficult as well as more difficult to keep their balance on the horse. For the horse it meant he had to bend his body more than in a larger ring.

Rings of 32 foot, 34 foot, or 36 foot diameter were of a better size to work in and the more average size, all of course depending on the size of the act, either a liberty act or a bareback riding act.

For theatres a stage mat was required for the ring. They were expensive and were heavy to handle so the ring size was kept down to as small a minimum as possible.

I know of three circuses that were playing in European permanent buildings. One was in Copenhagen, Denmark 1906-1907, another in 1906-1907 and also 1922-1923 in Warsaw, Poland as well as the one playing in 1908 and 1916-1917-1918 in Moscow, Russia.

The rings in these three circuses could only accommodate a sixteen horse liberty

act with the horses through the entire act traveling in pairs with no single file at any time. The size of these rings were no doubt 38 feet in diameter.

For a twelve horse liberty act it takes a ring of 42 foot diameter to have the horses travel in single file.

We have had dog and pony acts work on stages where the ponies worked on a mat smaller in size than any of the above sizes mentioned without a ring curb. The ponies soon learn to remain on the mat to hold their footing.

By the term liberty horses used by the circus profession we mean those working in freedom, without riders, reins, or lines. When teaching my liberty horses I first taught them their ABC's, each horse by himself, which was to learn to run in a circle, the sounds of the different commands, the cues from the two whips used, to learn to stop when asked, to change directions, to come to the center to me when called to do so, and one by one they have their lessons in rearing up.

Next the horses are worked two, four and more at one time and they learn their respective places in the finished act. They also must learn how to reach their places if a mix-up occurs, so they learn which line of horses travel next to the curb and which line of horses leaves the curb when they meet and become the inside line.

The training takes a great deal of time, in fact days and weeks of many hours along with much patience and confidence but when the act is ready with a routine of about ten minutes it

Jorgen Christensen with 24 horse liberty act, opening night of Cole show in Chicago Stadium in 1938. Burt Wilson Photo.



will be an act with a foundation in it.

Each animal will know where to go in case of a mix-up and know how to go there.

Some problems can arise when other type animals are to be used. For example, when in 1926-1927 I trained my Tableau Act, my four zebras had to jump up on the second tier of the center pedestal. I tried different ways to get them to do it. The way a pony or horse could be taught to do it did not work with the zebras.

After much study I was sure I had found the way it could be done. It had to be done with what is called a sling which is a harness like affair used on sick horses in their stalls to keep them on their feet. They are also used for loading and unloading horses on ship voyages.

My problem was solved. One zebra at a time got the harness put on. To the top center of the sling there was a strong rope through a double pulley block and through another block fastened up in the rafters like a mechanic used by acrobats and riders in practice. With this arrangement I could hold the zebra on the pedestal or pull him back when he jumped off into space.

With the camels in the Tableau Act it was a different problem. Each camel was to mount on one elephant tub standing on it with its four legs and then throw its front feet a distance of two feet over another elephant tub forming a bridge under their bodies. Between the tubs a line of horses would be traveling in the finished act. It was impossible to teach these clumsy camels to get up on the elephant tubs at their height. To overcome this I used a platform laid on the ground teaching each camel to walk across this platform and to stop and remain awhile on the platform.

As this first lesson was taking place the platform had gradually been trimmed down with it now only wide enough for the camel to step in on it.

The second step in teaching the five camels to mount the platform was to raise the platform gradually until it was up to about the height of the elephant tubs.

The camels stepped on the platform with their front feet putting all their weight on them like an acrobat and in slow motion lifted their hind-legs off the ground placing them up on the platform.

Next by stepping ahead the camels learned to lower themselves to the ground without jumping off.

When the camels were next confronted with the elephant tubs it was an easy matter to show them what I wanted them to do.

All of my animals for good behaviour were generously rewarded with carrots.

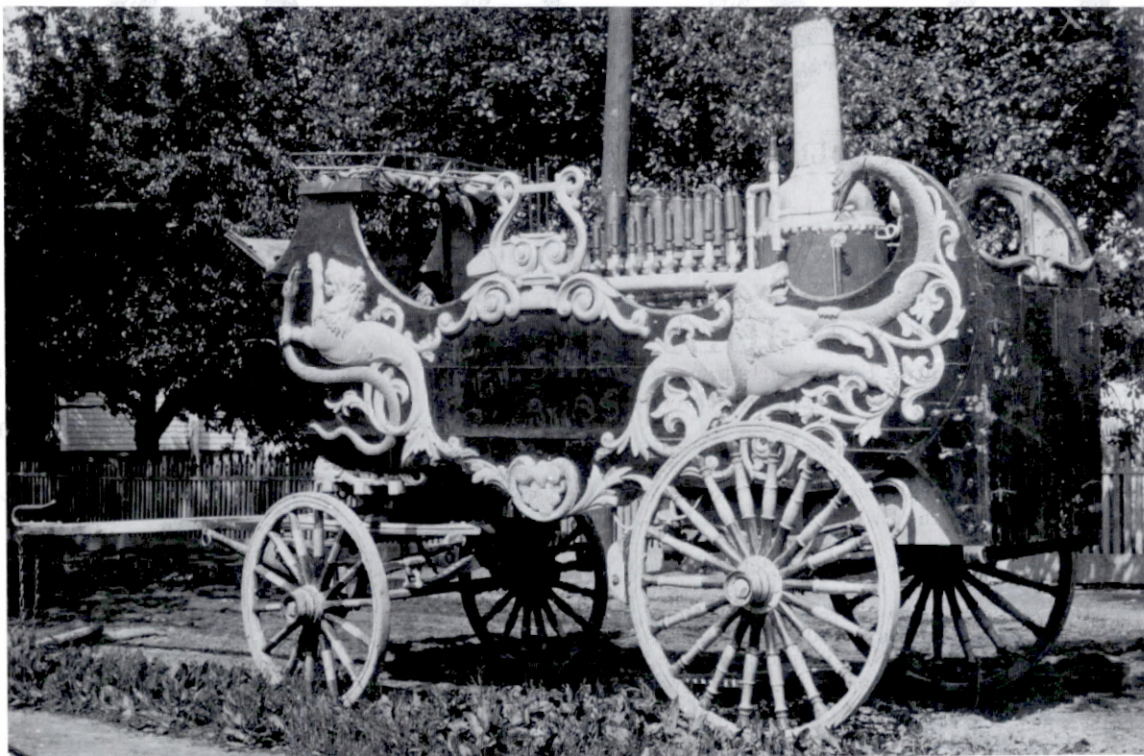
In the art of training it is as in life, you have to solve the problems as they confront you.



# Bill Woodcock's Circus Letterheads



This colorful letterhead of a short lived show was used in 1903. The title and pictures are in purple and outlined in gold.



This interesting wagon is pictured here as a steam calliope on Welsh Bros. Circus, around 1905. It is reported to have first been a bandwagon on Burr Robbins, and was later

definitely one of the first bandwagons used by the Ringling Bros., who sold it to Welsh. Welsh Bros. added the calliope. Original cabinet photo from Pfening Collection.



See Five Mile  
Long Circus Parade!

A black and white illustration of a marching band in uniform, featuring a drum major with cymbals, a tuba player, a euphonium player, and a flugelhorn player, marching past a row of houses.

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